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ABSTRACT

"Folksong in the Classroom" is a newsletter of a network of teachers of history, literature, music, and the humanities. Each issue contains songs, background information, classroom activities, and ideas for teachers to use in integrating folksongs into their teaching. Three issues of "Folksong in the Classroom" are included in volume 12. The fall 1991 issue, titled: "Fowls of the Air: Wild and Domesticated," includes the words, music and background information to the following songs: I Will Give My Love a Cherry; Little Bird; The Cuckoo; The Lark in the Morning; The Three Ravens; The Grey Goose; Shule Aroon (Come, My Love); and The Praties They Grow Small. The winter 1992 issue is titled: "Irish Immigration through Its Songs and Ballads." The words, music and background to the following songs are included: The Jackets Green; Caitilin Ni Uallachain; Brennan on the Moor; Roddy McCorley; Shtaradahdey; Mrs. McGrath; The Praties They Grow Small; The Farmers' Cursed Wife; Working on the Railway; and The Jug of Punch. The spring 1992 issue is titled: "The Civil War through Its Songs and Ballads." The words and music and background to the following songs are included: Old Abe Lincoln; The Dissolution Wagon; Northern Bonny Blue Flag; The Mississippi Volunteers; Johnny Is My Darling; The Southern Yankee Doodle; The Yankee Man of War; The Homespun Dress; Lord Lovell; General Lee's Wooing; The First of Arkansas; and The Battle Cry of Freedom. (DB)

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FOLKSONG IN THE CLASSROOM

Vol. XII No. 1 Fall 1991
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FOLKSONG IN THE CLASSROOM

A NETWORK OF TEACHERS OF HISTORY, LITERATURE, MUSIC AND THE HUMANITIES - A NEWSLETTER

Volume XII # 1 Fall 1991

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Folksong, in our belief, constitutes primary source material for the study of our own and other cultures. The singing of these songs is a key to firing students' imaginations, arousing their curiosity, and helping them to focus upon a theme. Through use of folksong we apply the fundamental educational principle that by starting with the familiar, students can more easily approach the unknown and learn about the lives and struggles of people who have lived in the past or who live in the world of today. We seek to help bring into the classroom, at all educational levels, songs that have been sung in this country throughout its history as well as in other countries.

Folksong in the Classroom, a newsletter representing a network of teachers of English, history, music and the humanities, is published three times a year. Its purpose is to make available to the educational community the folk music which is our heritage and which we believe all young people should have access to. We are also concerned with discussing the nature and the origins of this heritage:- offering suggestions about its classroom use; reviewing books and records where appropriate; and providing supplementary material such as bibliographies, discographies and songsheets. Our materials may be reproduced for educational purposes without permission provided that Folksong in the Classroom and the given sources are credited.

Folksong in the Classroom welcomes news from teachers about their work, and queries. We also welcome articles to be considered for publication. Materials submitted for review will be acknowledged in print, but we cannot guarantee a review in all cases. Enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope if you wish to have materials returned.

Folksong in the Classroom is a voluntary association of working teachers operating pro bono publico without pay. Subscriptions constitute the sole source of income, and contributions are welcomed. Correspondence should be sent to John W. Scott: 229 Suffolk Street, Holyoke, MA 01041; queries regarding subscriptions, back issues and available material should be sent to Diana Palmer: 433 Leadmine Road, Fiskdale MA 01518.

CORRESPONDENCE

Jerome A. McDuffie. Pembroke State University, N.C.

The June, 1991 issue of "History Matters" published by the National Council for History Education gave prominent coverage to the newsletter "Folksong in the Classroom." I would like to consider the newsletter as enrichment material for several of my advanced classes in American history. * * *

College teachers in increasing numbers, are discovering the uses of folk song for teaching history - especially social history. This underlines the point that these songs have a universal application in education. They are appropriate in teaching history, music and language from kindergarten to graduate school.

* * * * *

Nancy Wilson. Ewing, N.J.

I'm a new subscriber this year, and I still can't believe how wonderful your publication is! It falls into the category of, "If only somebody could/would take the time...," and somebody has - YOU! Huge thanks. I'm a teacher at a relatively new Quaker school - a visibly alternative school in which we get to integrate curriculum as much as we want or can. As one who teaches music, Central Study, reading and writing, I'm able to make excellent use of your material. This coming year (1991--2) we are studying Rivers - their geology, ecology, geography, and representative cultures that have emerged beside rivers. Volume VII, #2 and #3, are already in use as I prepare.

This past year, we studied the Americas - its many ecosystems and the groups of people who have immigrated into its lands -from the first immigrants (Native Americans - 15,000 B.C.) up to the present. I had to pick and choose from FSIC and had to draw on many other sources. So...an issue or volume involving songs of immigrant experience, or involving ethnic background/identity, might be very interesting and useful. * * * *

Your letter, Nancy, is very helpful. It shows how you have drawn on back issues of the newsletter and provides a guide for a way to go in the future. We may commit ourselves immediately, hopefully in Volume XII, to an issue on Irish Immigration through its songs and ballads. Here the format will be a little different from what it has been in the past. We will tell the story of this experience with a script that we have used with great success and that links the Irish motherland, the sea crossing and the new society to which the Irish came came.

* * * * * 5

4 Richard Scholz. Bellingham, WA

Why didn't you give credit Merle Travis for "Dark as a Dungeon" in your last issue (XI #2) * * * *

Good question. We apologize to Merle Travis for the omission. Sources will usually be listed either beneath the introduction to a song, or on the page where the song itself appears.

* * * * *

Jerry Orlen. Marblehead, MA

I so look forward to receiving my issues of Folksong but, as you well know, as public school teachers our desks often get piled high with unread materials during the year and it remains that way until the year is over, all papers are evaluated, rooms are clean and the summer vacation makes it possible for me to play "catch up." It's nice to see that you have made the former "Paper city of the World" your home. I am a graduate of Holyoke High, class of '58, and still visit my parents frequently. Holyoke has changed drastically. My heart goes out to George Counter who I knew as a kid and [I wonder] how he will deal with the 2 1/2 override failure yesterday.

Well, I have my summer reading all set and if a question arises I know where to write. Keep up the great work. * * *

It strikes us that you are making a fundamental point and stating it excellently. All of us are busy people, leading exhausting lives crammed with administrative detail. We need decent teaching resources that are immediately and cheaply available. University libraries, state and federal archives are all crammed to bursting with wonderful stuff; but this takes time, patience and money to find. Thus teachers and students in this rich country can starve in the midst of plenty. Francis Bacon, the English philosopher, wrote that "muck is no good except it be spread." This is true for manuscripts and music as much as manure. Ours is the humble but necessary work of fertilizing the field. Take your time! What we offer will await your convenience. George Counter, superintendent of Holyoke Schools, is facing critical difficulties. Holyoke, with its school budget slashed, is starting out the year with a four-day work week.

* * * * *

Leo Laventhal. New Orleans, LA

"Folksong in the Classsroom" is quite good. I teach U.S. history in a public high school in New Orleans and have long used songs. For what it's worth here is a list of songs I use in my AP U.S. History class:

Erie Canal. Got a mule, her name is Sal; and
We were 15 miles from Albany.
Irish Raiload Songs: Pat works on the railroad
Tarriers' Song
The Farmer is the Man (a Grange song)
Grine Kuzine (Yiddish) Tin Pan Alley song for urban
immigration
Makin' Whoopee: 1920's devergondage [partying]
The Depression: "I don't want your millions mister"
Brother Can You Spare a Dime
Woody Guthrie: Okie songs
1950's: Selections from the Doo Wop Songbook.
1960's: Milt Okun. New York Times 60's anthology.

My rule is only live music, with piano or electric minikeyboard. Students must sing. Most of them do so quite willingly.

* * * *

This is an interesting list covering a great deal of ground; and (as you pointed out in your letter) "a mix of folk, Tin Pan Alley and pop." We were struck in particular by your choice of Makin' Whoopee, which Eddie Cantor made known to millions in one of his movies. It is also a favorite of ours. The song, composed on the eve of the Depression, has a marvelous sparkle. Do you also include Blues?

* * * * *

Lois Liggett. Belle Plaine, KS

Following the school year of '89-'90, I retired following 30 years as an elementary school teacher in the local school. How I miss the children and the fun we had as we pursued the various paths that Music took us!

It was only a few years before retirement that I discovered Folksong in the Classroom, but what a find!! I have all of the back issues and teaching aids. I continue to use the materials in my continued work in two Folk Music organizations and in my volunteer work in pre-schools and performances for various organizations.

I have a question that has gone unanswered for several years but hope to find the answer now. How do I go about getting permission to copy songs in Folksong in the Classsroom and arranging them for Mountain Dulcimer and Autoharp to share with members in our learning sessions? Thank you for any help that you can give me and thank you also for the valuable service you give to many people through the newsletter. * * *

The notice 'copyright' on page 1 of the newsletter refers only to written material in which we have a common law copyright, and which we wish to protect from commercial exploitation. All such material you are welcome to copy and use, free of charge, for

educational purposes. With respect to the songs and lyrics, 98% of the ones that we reproduce are in the public domain. This means they are traditional material, part of a heritage that has been handed down over many years, and that belongs to all of us. Many song collectors, it is true, copyright the traditional songs that appear in their collections. What, essentially, is being copyrighted here is the transcription that it has cost the collector time and effort to make. If there are any restrictions at all on the songs that we reproduce, we will be careful to provide that information. Otherwise feel free to reproduce anything that is published in our pages, but acknowledging as a matter of courtesy the source from which it was obtained.

The exception to this general rule is the body of song material composed and copyrighted during the past 70 years. For such songs permission needs to be obtained from the person or company that holds the copyright. In Leo Laventhal's list, for example (given above), the songs that he uses for the period from the 1920's til today are probably all copyrighted. This is certainly true for Makin' Whoopee, Woody Guthrie's songs, and the ones reproduced in Milt Okun's famous Songs of the Sixties.

If you yourself make arrangements for the songs that you decide to use, you yourself are free to copyright these. We, as an example, have made guitar arrrangements for many American folk songs; and these have appeared in The Living History Library series, published by Alfred A. Knopf in the 1960's and '70's. Anybody who wished to reproduce these arrangements would need to ask our permission -- which of course would be given free of charge if such reproduction was sought for educational purposes. So, as far as Folksong in the Classroom is concerned, the rule is 'use and enjoy.'

* * * * *

Douglas Bartholomew. Bozeman MT

Your newsletter is a valuable contribution. Keep it up.

* * *

Glad to hear from you. We'll do our best!

* * * * *

Jean Smith. Clinton MD

While I'm off this summer, one project is to send you my gatherings of peace songs for the long awaited peace issue. I hope others are doing the same.

* * *

Some of the songs which we had begun to collect for a peace issue were published in XI #3, "Songs of the Soldiers." Could you send us a list of what you have collected? We'd like to hear from

others, too, about the peace issue (see also Will Martin's letter on page 8 of this issue).

* * * * *

Jerry Kerlin, President, Kodaly Organization of New York

Enclosed please find my check for $12 for my subscription to Folksong in the Classroom. Congratulations on filling a real need in folk research and promotion. * * *

Thank you, Jerry. Music teachers who are members of your organization in many parts of the country are valued supporters of Folksong in the Classroom. Many of them appreciate whatever historical information we can supply with respect to the traditional songs which they love so much and teach so well.

* * * * *

Bob Doolittle. Memphis, N.Y.

I am curious whether you solicit articles from anyone or not. * * *

We are anxious to hear from readers who have suggestions for articles which they or somebody else, might write.

* * * * *

Susan Curtis. Newcastle DE

Have spent three days this week studying the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire -- really opened our eyes to modern fire safety. Conned our marvelous music teacher into doing the FITC ballad with my 8th graders -- excellent! They not only asked for copies of the song but the poems too. * * *

Susan refers to Laurie Seidman's fine presentation of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire that appears on pages 76--81 of Vol IX #2 (Winter, 1989). The Ballad of the Triangle Fire, that appeared in this issue , and that Susan's students sang, was written by the renowned folklorist and collector of Yiddish songs, Ruth Rubin.

* * * * *

Nancy Lee Batchelder. Seaside, OR

Cross indexing the Newfoundland songs to previous issues is a wonderful and useful resource. Thank you. P.S. Background material on Newfoundland is fantastic. * * *

Thanks, Nancy. You've made our day.

* * * * *

Helen and Richard Scholtz, musicians and teachers, send the brochure of the 18th annual Puget Sound Guitar Workshop, 1503 E Street, Bellingham, WA 98225, conducted for one week at the end of July. It sounds very good: there's a lot to be learned from these people!

* * * * *

Art Thieme. Peru, IL

I sure do look forward to your magazine. I've been recovering from a few surgeries and was bored stiff when your new issue saved me. Thanks!!! * * *

We have never thought of ourselves as angels of mercy, but song is certainly powerful medicine against boredom. Try singing a lullaby like "Hushabye" to yourself, next time you're stuck in a five-mile traffic jam.

* * * * *

Will Martin. Eugene, OR

As always I am happy to read another great issue (XI #2). "John Henry" has been my favorite since I was a kid. I have sung it over and over and feel that it conveys one of the all-time powerful messages about what it means to be human. How about an issue on peace? Here is "Peace like a River:" I always teach it a acappella with simple ASL signs; then add guitar. It is surprisingly popular with most everyone. Thanks again for all the great tunes and background! * * *

Will sends with his letter words and music for "Peace Like a River" (traditional, arranged for two part singing in close harmony). This beautiful song is new to us. Thank you! We will add this song to our 'songs of peace' file; and we will look for other peace songs from those of you who have favorites you would like to send in.

* * * * *

Elizabeth Scott Jannot Wallingford CT

I am a teacher in France - teaching American students French, and, although you dont have much material in French, I love getting your newsletter anyway! If ever you come across songs specifically written to help students learn French, that would make a great issue. * * * *

This strikes us as an excellent suggestion. In learning a second language folk songs are a marvelous resource for expanding vocabulary as well as introducing students to another culture. Many people find that it is much easier at the start to learn the pronunciation of foreign words by singing them. And the repetition of simple words and phrases and refrains, which is

characteristic of folksong, helps the student enormously. In an issue on French songs we would concentrate upon a number of children's songs unfamiliar to most American students. How about, the following: Marie-Madeleine; Petit Tambour; Sur Le Pont d'Avignon; A La Claire Fontaine; *Au Jardin de Mon Pere; Chevaliers de la Table Ronde; En Passant par la Lorraine; Malbrouck S'en Va-t-en Guerre; *Dessous Les Rosiers Blancs; Dans Les Prisons de Nantes; Aupres de ma Blonde; *Alouette. Many if not all these songs are also sung in Quebec. The beautiful 'Isabeau S'y Promene,' for example, which we published in vol. XI #1 (Songs of Newfoundland), is originally from Normandy and Brittany. (Note: songs in which birds feature are marked with an *).

* * * * *

Dan Carlson Rochester, MN

Your latest edition featured "Songs of the Soldiers." I am wondering if you are familiar with Poems and Songs of the Civil War, edited by Lois Hill (New York: Fairfax Press, 1990)? It is 239 pages long, but contains no music, only lyrics, and in hardcover costs only $5.99. Fairfax Press is distributed by Outlet Book Company Inc., 235 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y.

* * * *

One segment of Ken Burns' "Civil War" aired recently was a performance, by noted singers, of songs of the period. Most of the songs which Burns selected, with the possible exception of "Lorena," were not soldiers' songs. They were, rather, songs like "The Vacant Chair," that create a sentimental or romantic mood. One freedom song, "Many Thousand Gone," was included; there was no reference to any of the splendid battle songs created by black soldiers.

The soldiers of the Civil War, Northern and Southern, black and white, created innumerable songs to tell of their battle-field experiences; most of them remain little known or sung. So we are grateful to you for drawing Lois Hill's book to our attention, and we shall examine it with great interest. "Folk Song in the Classroom" has published one issue on the Civil War (Vol. II #1). It may be that we ought to follow this up with another issue, "Soldiers' Songs of the Civil War."

* * * * *

Archangel Gabriel in flight

REPORT on ENVIRONMENTAL MUSIC in SCHOOL

"Song," said Richard Cargill, speaking at Athens, Ohio on June 29 of this year, "is fundamental to the formation of the environmental ethic which must inspire millions if the planet is to be saved."

Richard Cargill, a teacher at Willowbrook High School in Villa Park, Illinois, spoke to teachers at the annual meeting of the Institute for Democracy in Education at Ohio University. Mr.Cargill is advisor to Willowbrook High's EarthCare, the voice of the student activists. [1250 S. Ardmore Avenue, Villa Park, IL 60181]

The students at Willowbrook High, Cargill said, have a student club called Students for a Better Environment, which enlists student support in two categories of Active and Supporting Members. The club gets up petition drives and organizes meetings on matters of environmental concern; it also puts out EarthCare. Cargill provided his audience with a sample issue of this paper: a truly impressive job, well printed and well written, quite up to Foxfire standards.

Mr. Cargill brings the environment into his classes with music. "Sometimes," he said, "it is hard to say exactly where the student club ends and the class begins." He aims to build a conservation ethic among the students of Willowbrook, which he hopes will become a fundamental spiritual and political component of their future lives. The students themselves contribute to the teaching of this ethic by bringing to class their favorite environmental songs composed, many of them, by members of their own generation.

Mr Cargill played some of these for us. Truly, it was a moving experience. "Song," said he, "is fundamental to the formation of this environmental ethic which must inspire millions if the planet is to be saved." Tune in, he added, to environmental issues through the media of music.

This (it struck us) is excellent advice. We are witnessing, in the 1980's and 1990's a blossoming of environmental song which in its beauty and creativity is unmatched by anything that we have seen since the 1960's. This was borne home in some of the examples that Mr. Cargill used to make his point.

We listened to Olivia Newton John's "The Dolphin Song."

See them play in the moonlight
Watch them dance in the sun
They're the children of freedom - everyone
As they care for each other
With no question or cause
They deserve to be treasured as a source of love

If only I can help right a wrong
With my dolphin song
Then I'll have done what I set out to do
If I can only make one man aware
One person care
Then I'll have done what I promised you

We listened to Cat Stevens's "Where Do the Children Play?"

I know we've come a long way
We're changing day to day.
But tell me...where do the children play?

And you crack the sky
Scrapers fill the air
And you keep on building higher until there's no more room up there
Will you make us laugh?
Will you make us cry?
Will you tell us when to live?
Will you tell us when to die?

I know we've come a long way
We're changing day to day
But tell me...Where do the children play?

We listened, too, to Heavy Metal's "Mother Earth" and the poignant message in the lyrics that the music drowns.

Mother please forgive them
For they know not what they do
Looking back in history books
It's seems it's nothing new
O let my mother live.

FOWLS of the AIR

INTRODUCTION

The soaring life of birds has been an inspiration to humanity over the centuries. People have watched them wheeling, diving and gliding, and they have thought: "I want to live forever! I want to fly!" Daedalus, the legendary Cretan inventor, was imprisoned, it is said, in the labyrinth that he had himself created, along with his son Icarus. He fashioned two pairs of wings so that they might escape from their prison, and fastened them on with wax. "Do not fly to close to the sun," he warned Icarus, "for if the heat of the sun melts the wax, we are lost." As Edith Hamilton tells it,

> "As the two flew lightly and without effort away...the delight of this new and wonderful power went to the boy's head. He soared exultingly up, paying no heed to his father's anguished commands. Then he fell. The wings had come off. He dropped into the sea and the waters closed over him."
> (Mythology. Boston: Little Brown, 1942.)

Many people, like Icarus, have striven to fly and, like him, have fallen. A New Deal painter blazoned their story and their dream on the walls of the Butler naval airport rotunda on Long Island. We know little about this young man, except that he was captivated with the story of flight. The mural, sweeping in a circle around the building's wall, celebrated in color the dreams and the strivings of pioneers like Daedalus, Da Vinci, and the Wright brothers. The painter finished his work in 1940, put away his brushes, joined the air force and flew away to fight in World War II. Airport bureaucrats with no use for the dreams or the ecstasies of flight whited out the mural in 1945.

The young man's mural told of birds as well as humans. Would people ever have dreamed of flying if birds had not provided the role model and inspired the vision? An introduction to the life of birds is thus also an introduction to the story of human freedom.

Birds remain the greatest wanderers on earth. In fall and spring the skies along the flyways are filled with their migrant swarms. Birds, even very small ones like the humming birds, shrink the globe with flights of unimaginable length. This

feathered nomadism strikes a chord in many hearts. Human history for uncounted millennia has been the history of hunters and gatherers who led a wandering or at best semi-settled existence. This nomadic stage has long since passed for most of the human race. Many of us are confined, instead, in a world of concrete, steel and asphalt. But we have not lost what Homer called 'the restless itch to rove.' The birds speak to us of this freedom.

Bird life and bird song has been a source of joy for millions. Our literature is filled with the tribute of poets to birds as a precious, irreplaceable feature of existence. Their beauty and mystery encourage us to watch them, to record their comings and goings, and to study them. They are an invitation not only to a life of action, but to one of contemplation. This is a fact that perhaps has special significance for North Americans as we approach the 21st century. 'Development' with its accompanying destruction of nature, has been a central feature of the American experience. Aside from great naturalists like David Henry Thoreau, most Americans have devoted little of their time to contemplation.

An environmental ethic will change this. It will emphasise reverence for wildlife. The camera will replace the gun as the instrument that is best for shooting birds, for preserving the record of their lives rather than obliterating that record.

Songs about birds abound in the literature and aid teachers who have the ambition to develop an environmental ethic in their classrooms. These songs are small works of art that help children and young people to explore the world which they inherit; to become passionately aware both of the splendor of this world and its fragility in the face of 'progress.'

In this issue we have selected a few fine songs with which to help explore the wonderful world of birds. Some of these -- such as "I Gave my Love a Cherry," "The Three Ravens," "Little Bird," "The Cuckoo," and "The Lark in the Morning" -- work well at kindergarten or elementary levels. The wild geese songs -- that is "The Grey Goose," "The Praties they Grow Small," and "Shule Aroon" -- provide powerful symbols with which to explore the meaning of freedom, love and oppression.

I WILL GIVE MY LOVE a CHERRY

Chickens and roosters are mentioned in a number of songs. We have published two in past issues: "The Old Man in the Woods," and "The Fox" (both in vol. I #3). The themes with which they are most often linked are the dawn of the day, signalled by the crowing of the cock; the hen as symbol of warm protective motherhood; and the Resurrection. These are also celebrated in verse, most notably by Christina Rossetti:

'Kookoorookoo! kookoorookoo!'
  Crows the cock before the morn;
'Kikirikee! Kikirikee!'
  Roses in the east are born.

A white hen sitting
 On white eggs three:
Next, three speckled chickens
 As plump as plump can be.

An owl and a hawk
 And a bat come to see;
But chicks beneath their mother's wing
 Squat safe as safe can be.

New England
Tombstone: 1760

(source: Sing Song: a Nursery Rhyme Book and Other Poems for Children. New York: Macmillan Co., 1944)

For inclusion here we have chosen "I Will Give My Love a Cherry." The simple lyric is matched with a tranquil and beautiful Nova Scotian melody. The song is an old one that has been popular both in the British Isles and North America. The images are of fertility:- the womb, the earth in bloom; of two (in the symbol of the marriage ring) who are united with 'no rent to be seen.' The chicken is central to the theme.

(source: John Anthony Scott, The Ballad of America. Carbondale, IL: 1983)

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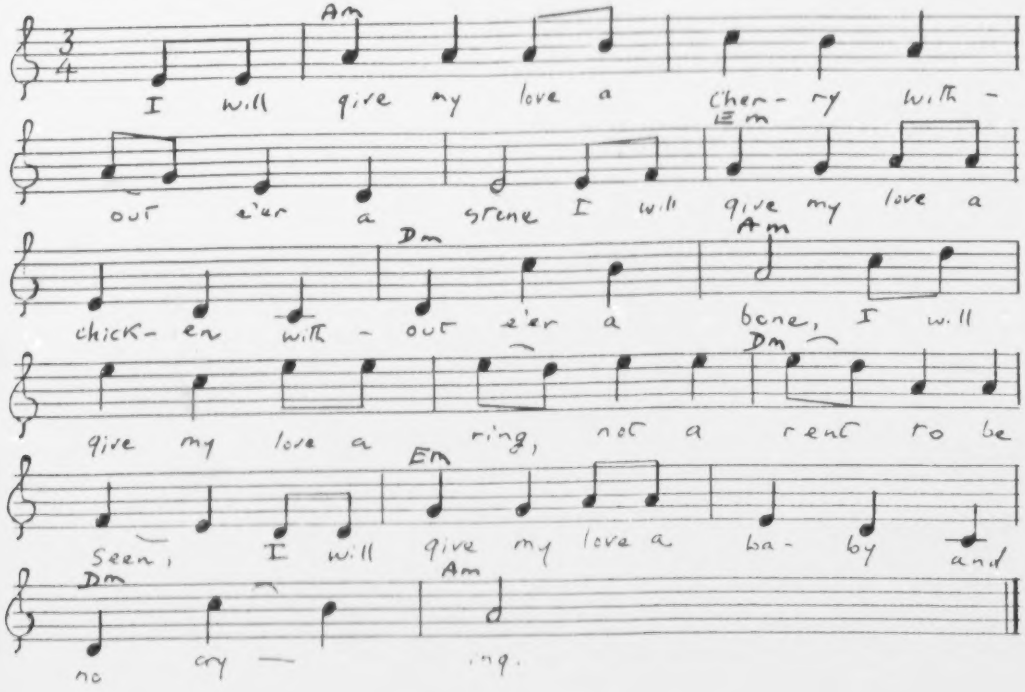
I WILL GIVE MY LOVE a CHERRY



I will give my love a cherry without e'er a stone,
I will give my love a chicken without e'er a bone,
I will give my love a ring, not a rent to be seen,
I will give my love a baby with no crying.

How can there be a cherry without a stone?
How can there be a chicken without a bone?
How can there be a ring, not a rent to be seen?
How can there be a baby with no crying?

A cherry when it's blooming it has no stone.
A chicken in the egg it has no bone,
A ring when it's running, there's no rent to be seen,
A baby when it's sleeping, there's no crying.

LITTLE BIRD

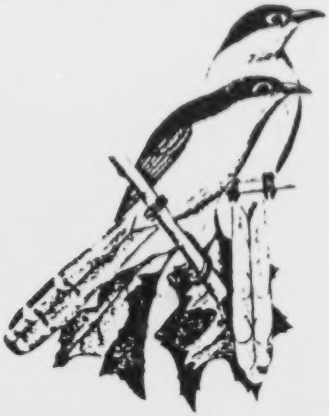
This charming children's song comes from South Carolina. It lends itself to dance and play as much as to singing. Ruth Crawford Seeger used the following game at the Silver Spring Cooperative Nursery School in Maryland:

"All the children except one form a circle with hands joined and arms arched to form windows. The remaining child goes in and out the windows."

(source: American Folk Songs for Children. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1948)

THE CUCKOO

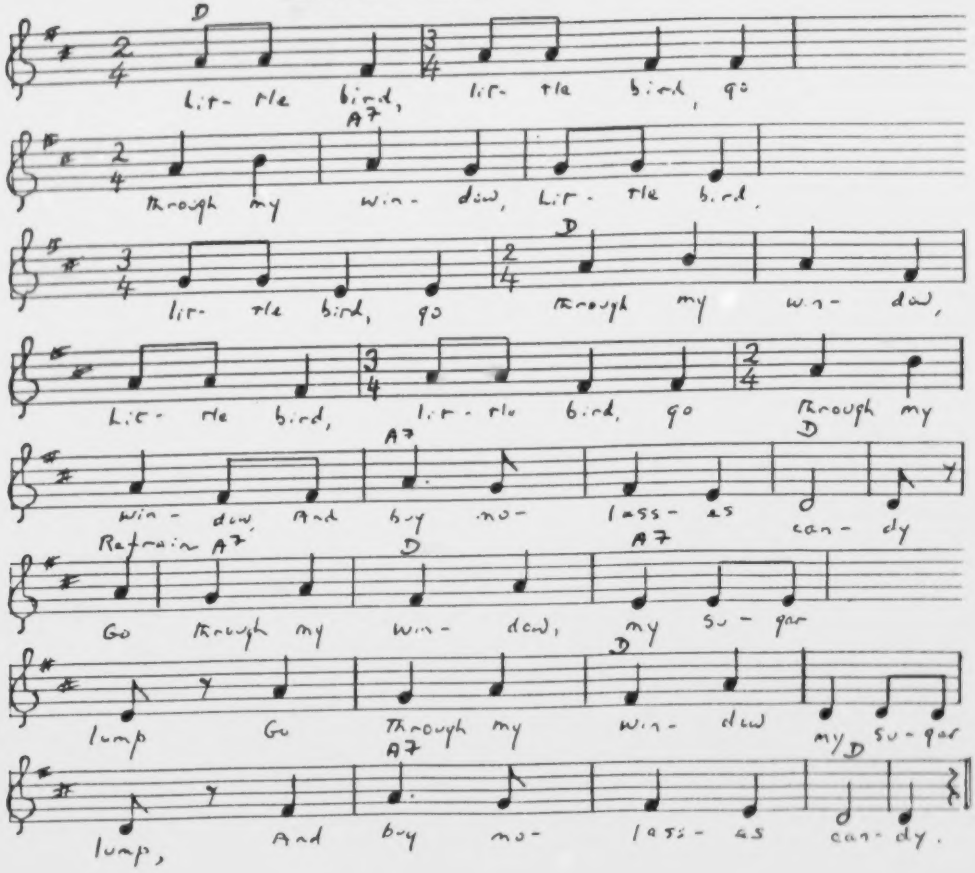
"The Cuckoo"is an Appalachian mountain song. The verse reproduced here is often sung by itself, or used as a refrain for verses that tell of faithless love. Yellow-billed and black-billed cuckoos are common breeders in the Appalachians, being found in woodlands and along streams. The call of these birds is not as melodic as the haunting echo (cuc-coo) of the common or European cuckoo, which gives the species its name. This sound has provided inspiration for poets: it is the herald of spring. Note William Wordsworth's famous lines:



O blithe newcomer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice:
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering voice?

While I am lying in the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear;
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off and near.

To see thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love;
Still longed for, never seen.

LITTLE BIRD

Little bird, little bird,
Go through my window,
Little bird, little bird,
Go through my window,
Little bird, little bird,
And buy molasses candy.

Refrain

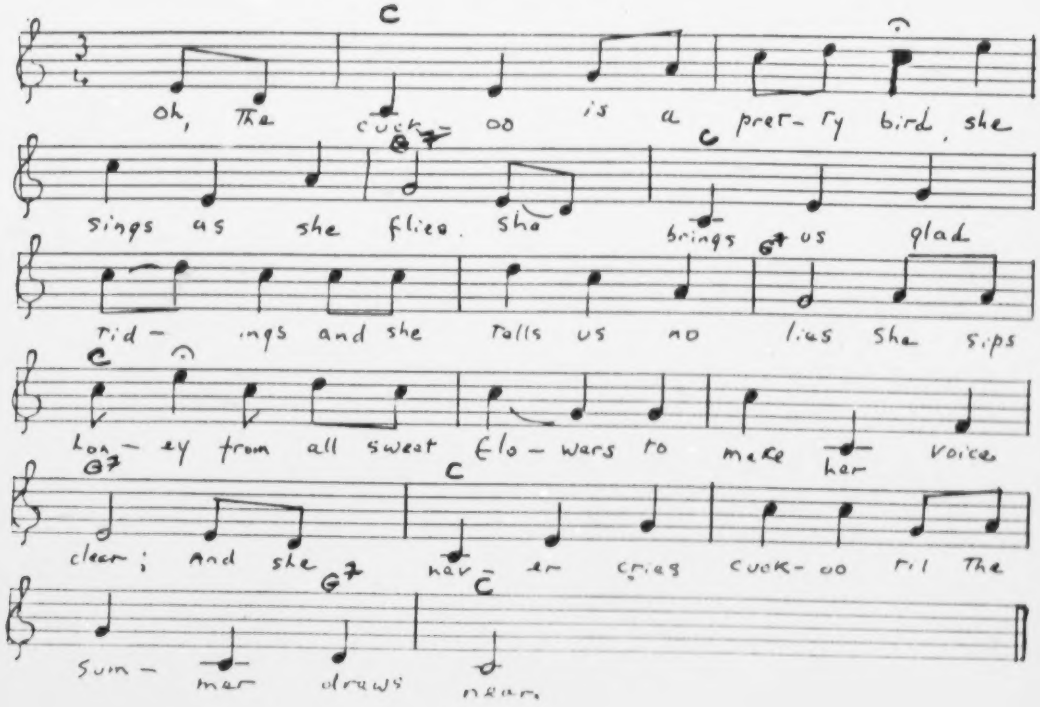
Go through my window,
My sugar lump,
Go through my window,
My sugar lump,
And buy molassses candy.

Blue bird, blue bird,
Fly through my window.
Blue bird, blue bird,
Fly through my window,
Fly through my window,
And buy molasses candy.

Refrain

Fly through my window,
My little bird,
Fly through my window,
My little bird,
And buy molasses candy.

THE CUCKOO



Oh, the cuckoo is a pretty bird, she sings as she flies.
She brings us glad tidings, and she tells us no lies.
She sips honey from all sweet flowers to make her voice clear;
And she never cries 'cuckoo' til the summer draws near.

source: Marie Boette. Singa Hipsy Doodle and Other Songs of West Virginia. Parkersburg, 1971.

THE LARK in the MORNING

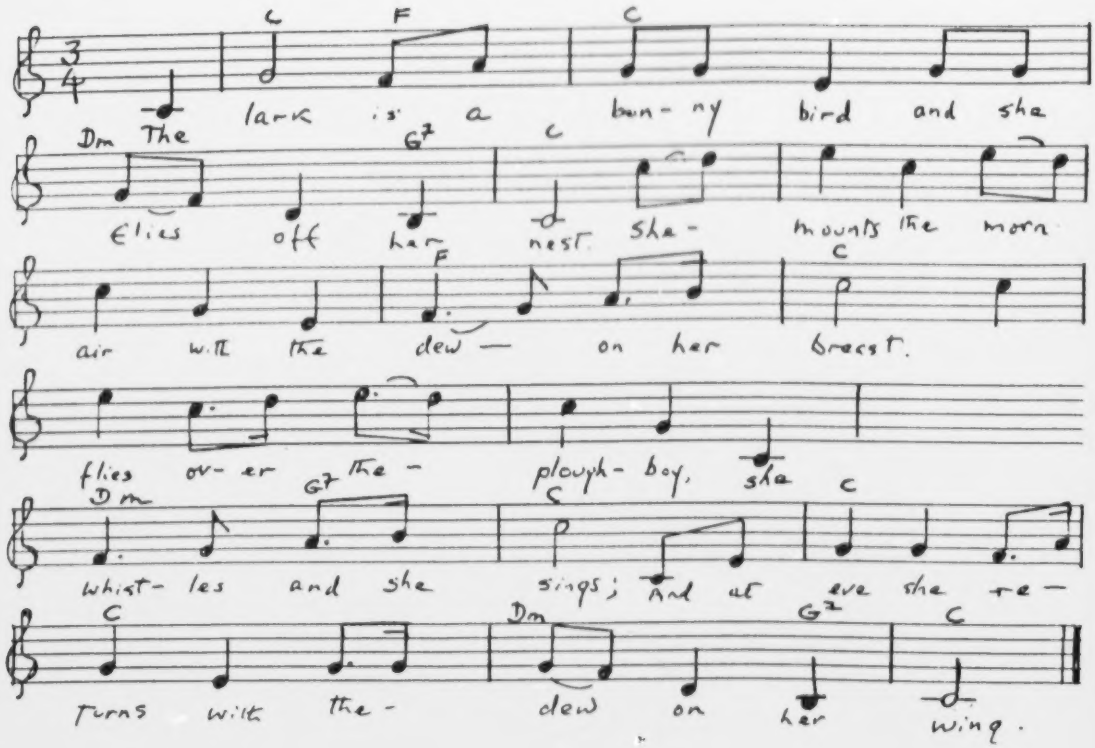
Larks are small birds that dwell in open fields; they seldom alight on trees or bushes. The subspecies, the Eurasian Skylark, is the subject of the lovely English song which we reproduce here, "The Skylark in the Morning." The lark's song, delivered in flight, is a continuous outpouring of trills and warbles. Few birds in the British Isles or North America make music more beautiful. Why does the skylark sing so wonderfully? It is useless to debate the question. All that we can say is that the lark in song arouses in the listener a sense of overpowering joy. Sadly, the Eurasian skylark has no habitat in North America except Vancouver Island and the San Juan Islands nearby. The subspecies, the Horned Lark, is common throughout North America. Its song, in contrast to that of the skylark, is "a weak twittering, delivered from the ground or in flight." (National Geographic Society, Field Guide to the Birds of North America [Washington, D.C., n.d.], 294).

source: Peter Kennedy. Folksongs of Britain and Ireland. New York: Schirmer Books, 1975.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight.

(from Percy Bysshe Shelley, To a Skylark)

THE LARK in the MORNING


C F C
3/4
The lark is a bon- ny bird and she
Dm G7 C
flies off her nest she-
mounts the morn
F C
air with the dew on her breast.
flies over the-
G7
plough- boy, she
Dm C C
whist- les and she sings; And at eve she re-
C Dm G7 C
turns with the- dew on her wing.

The lark is a bonny bird and she flies off her nest.
She mounts the morn air with the dew on her breast.
She flies over the ploughboy, she whistles and she sings;
And at eve she returns with the dew on her wing.

The Three Ravens is a classic ballad from the collection of Francis J. Child (Childe no. 26). The song dates back, at the very least, to the 18th century. It is a lament set to a melody of great beauty.

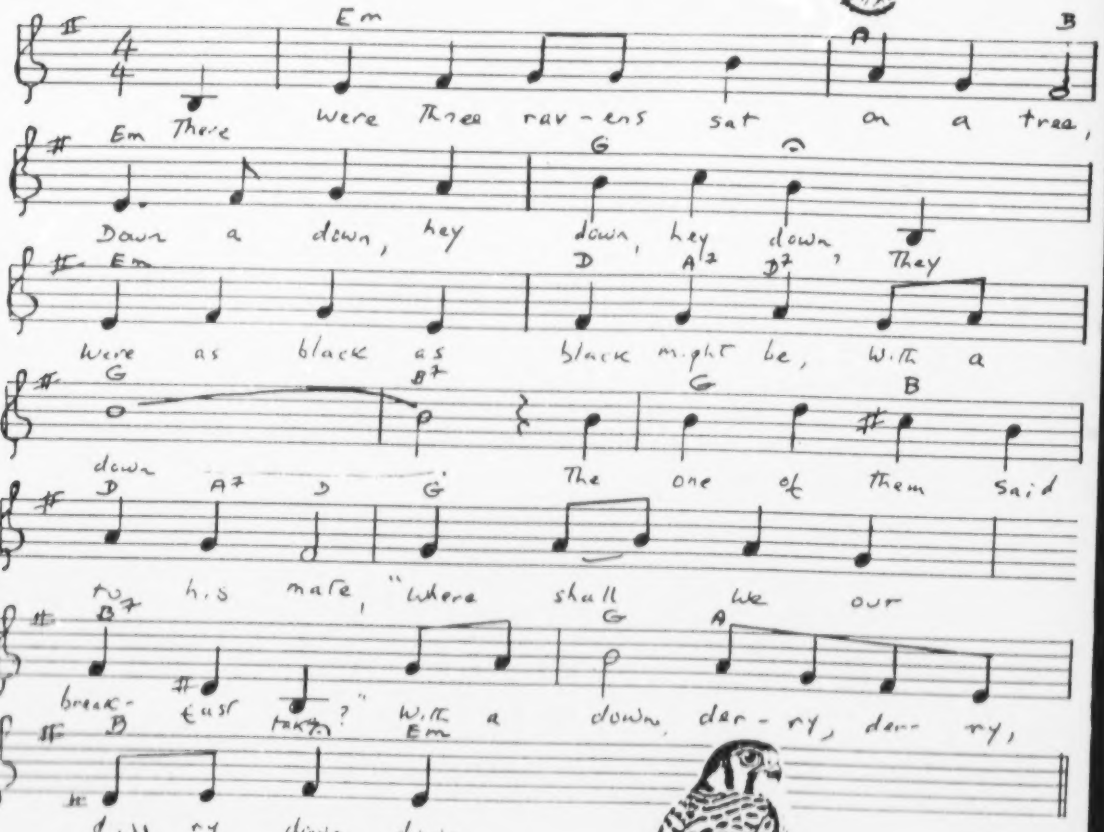
The story opens with three ravens perched upon a tree, discussing the matter of breakfast. The scene shifts to a green field where hounds and hawks guard the body of a dead knight. It is clear that the ravens will have to look elsewhere for their breakfast. They play no further part in the story. But the introduction of these birds creates a somber mood. Ravens are crows, birds that feast off carrion. Their blackness denotes mourning; they are an omen of death.

For the rest, the theme of the song is fidelity: the faithfulness with which hounds and hawks keep watch and with which the wife - presented as 'a fallow doe' - takes his body up and gives it burial.

The song is interesting from the viewpoint of bird study because it introduces hawks. These birds present a contrast to the crows. Whereas crows consume the flesh of dead creatures, hawks are fierce hunters of living prey. Whereas the ravens are wildfowl, the hawks, like chickens, are domesticated birds. The use of hawks for hunting is an art that dates back thousands of years. This domestication is an aspect of the agricultural revolution that takes us to the heart of the history of the modern world. It is, too, a fascinating subject for classroom exploration.

A Scottish version of "The Three Ravens" allots a more active role to the crows, so that the story has a different outcome. 'Let us feast off the knight's body,' says the second crow. 'Hounds, hawks, and wife have all abandoned him.' The crows proceed to their breakfast. The tale ends with these stark lines:

> Many a one for him makes mourn,
> But none shall know where he is gone;
> Over his white bones, when they are bare
> The wind shall blow for evermore.

THE THREE RAVENS

Common Raven

American Kestrel

There were three ravens sat on a tree
  Down a down, hey down, hey down,
They were as black as black might be,
  With a down.
The one of them said to his mate,
  "Where shall we our breakfast take?"
With a down, derry, derry, derry down, down.

"Down in yonder green field,
  Down a down, hey down, hey down,
There lies a knight slain beneath his shield,
  With a down.
His hounds they lie down at his feet,
  So well do they their master keep,
With a down, derry, derry, derry down, down.

His hawks they fly so eagerly,
  Down a down, hey down, hey down,
No other fowl dare come him nigh,
  With a down.
Down there comes a fallow doe,
  As great with young as she might go,
With a down, derry, derry, derry down, down.

She lifted up his bloody head,
  Down a down, hey down, hey down,
And kissed his wounds that were so red,
  With a down.
She got him up upon her back,
  And carried him to earthen lake,
With a down, derry, derry, derry down, down.

She buried him before the prime,
  Down a down, hey down, hey down,
She was dead herself ere eventime,
  With a down.
God send every gentleman.
  Such hawks, such hounds, and such woman,
With a down, derry, derry, derry down, down."

prime: morning
nigh: near
eventime: evening

24 THE GREY GOOSE

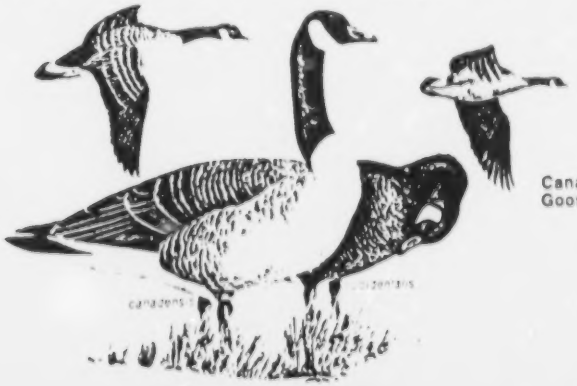
Birds have been closely linked with human dreams of freedom as well as flight. This is natural enough: the two concepts are closely connected.

This is illustrated by the three songs that we reproduce on the following pages. The first of these is the African-American "Grey Goose." This song almost certainly dates from the days of slavery. John and Alan Lomax first heard the song in the Texas State Penitentiary where it was sung during the 1930's by black convicts on the work gangs. The gang leader sang the story line and the gang responded with the refrain "Lawd, Lawd, Lawd." As the Lomaxes noted,

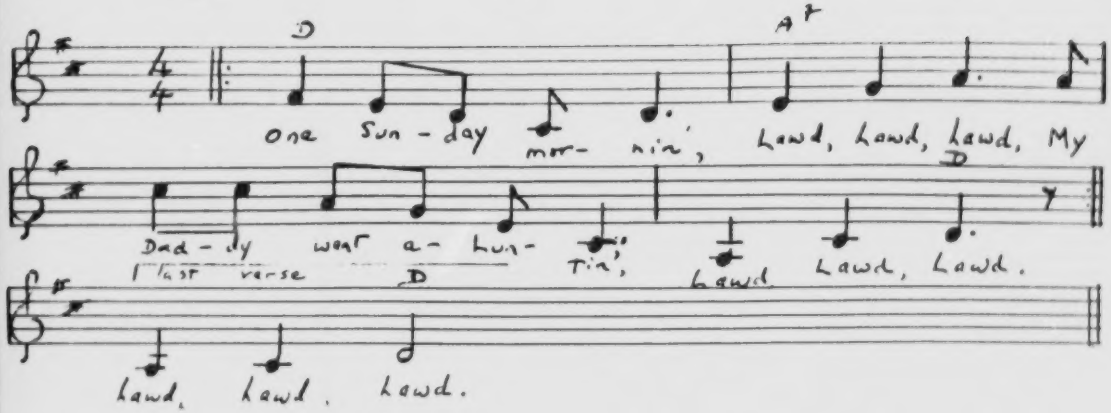
> "This is the song of a subject people that feels itself stronger and more enduring than its oppressors....You could see that this simple and charming ballad of a mighty goose sustained and encouraged these men, helped them to better endure what they could not escape, made them feel strong and sound and full of hope in spite of the black bars and the guns that held them." (Best Loved American Folk Songs. New York, 1947)

The Grey Goose, told simply as a tall tale, is a favorite with young children.

The Canada Goose is the most common of our wild geese and an all-American bird. Its breeding and wintering ranges stretch from the vast northern shores of Canada to the Rio Grande, from the Pacific coast to the Atlantic. Canada Geese always breed near water. The flocks migrate in magnificent V-formations; the air is loud with their haunting 'honk-honk.' The bird, with its various subspecies, combines a wide range of greys from silver to blue to brown.



Canada Goose

THE GREY GOOSE

One Sunday mornin',
Lawd, Lawd, Lawd,
My Daddy went a-huntin',
Lawd, Lawd, Lawd.

Repeat the refrain 'Lawd, Lawd, Lawd,' after each line

'Long came a grey goose,
Well, up to his shoulder.

The gun went off a-boula!
And down came the grey goose.

Down he came a-fallin',
He was six weeks a-fallin'.

Then your wife and my wife,
They gave a feather pickin'.

They were six weeks a-pickin'
Yes, six weeks a-pickin'.

He was six weeks a-cookin',
And they put him on the table.

And the fork couldn't stick him
And the knife couldn't cut him.

Well, they throwed him in the hog pen,
An' the hog couldn't eat him.

So they took him to the saw mill
Yes, they took him to the saw mill

The saw couldn't cut him,
An' he broke the saw's teeth out

An' the last time I seed him,
He was flyin' over the ocean.

With a long string of goslin's
An' they all gwine 'quink, quonk

26

SHULE AROON (The Wild Geese Song)
THE PRATIES THEY GROW SMALL

The two songs that follow are Irish; their meaning is bound up with the image of the wild geese.

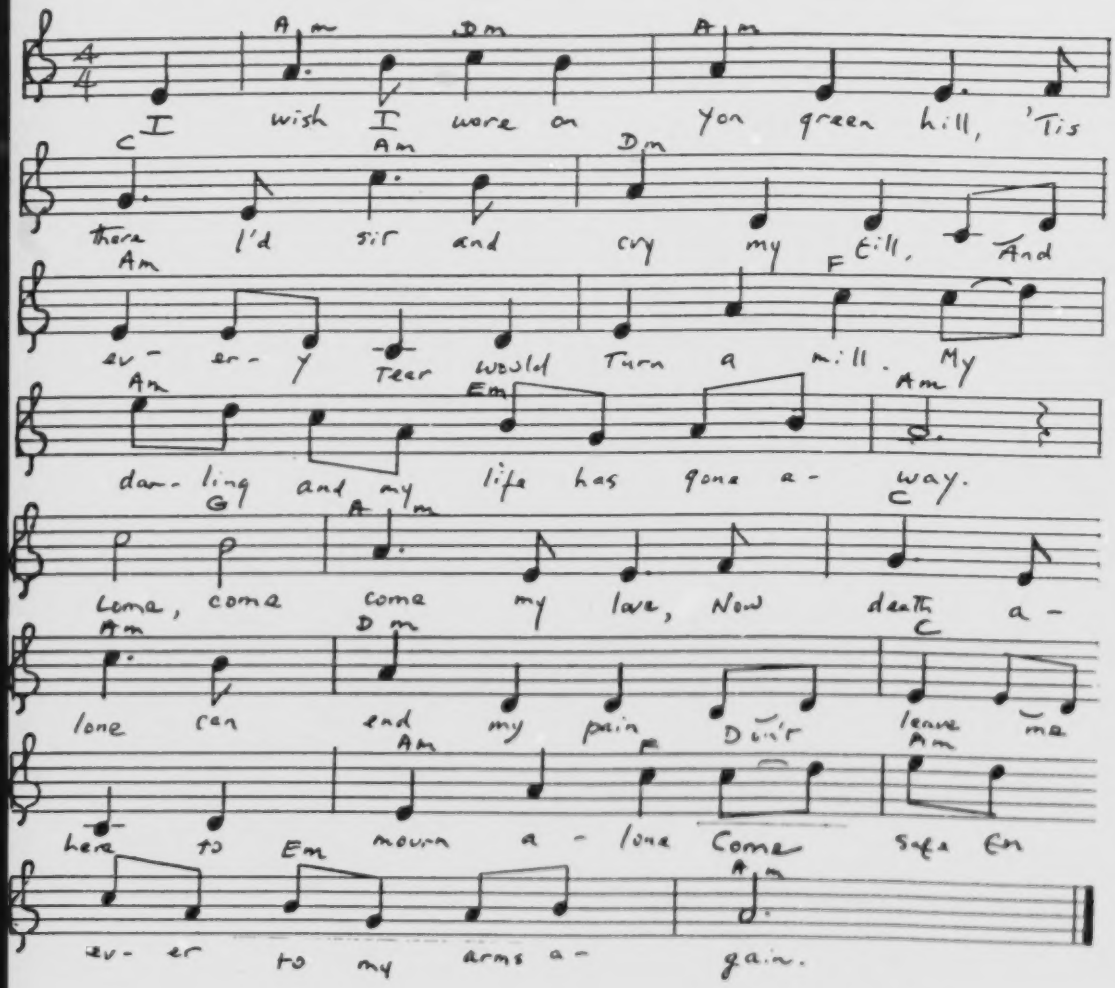
"Shule Aroon" or "the song of the wild geese," arose out of the Irish struggle for independence in the 17th century. Rebellion against William III (William of England and of Orange) broke out in 1688 and was crushed by military force. The treaty of Limerick (1701) gave the rebel leaders a choice between taking the oath of allegiance to William, or exile. Most of them chose exile, and sailed away to take service with the French. Their dream was to return to their native land and liberate it under a new leader, the son of the exiled James II of England.

"Shule Aroon" is a woman's lament for her lover, one of the 'wild geese' who had flown into exile. She gives voice to deep, conflicting emotions. 'I'll sell everything I have,' she says, 'to buy you a sword to fight for Ireland. Come back safely to my arms! For love of you I'll live alone and go begging and whoring to earn my bread. Slim chance that you'll ever return!' ['Dye my petticoats red' means to follow the life of a prostitute. Red, traditionally, has been a symbol of prostitution: e.g., red light district, scarlet letter. Note also a current country-and-western hit: I ain't the woman in red,/ I ain't the girl next door,/ I'm somewhere in the middle,/ I'm the woman you're lookin' for].

"Shule Aroon" has been little known or sung in North America. It has survived mainly, with a less interesting melody, in the form of "Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier" -- a lament for men who marched off to fight in the colonial and revolutionary wars of the 18th century (see vol. II #2).

(source: William Cole. Folk Songs of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. New York, 1961. Translation of the refrain by John Anthony Scott)

"The Praties They Grow Small" is a song that arose out of the agonies of Ireland's landless peasantry during the famines of the 1840's one hundred and fifty years later. This song with its beautiful melody is a starving and oppressed people's cry of despair. It articulates, through its wonderful second verse (Oh, I wish that we were geese, night and morn,...), the universal human yearning for peace, plenty and freedom. (source: John Anthony Scott. The Ballad of America. Carbondale, 1983)

SHULE AROON (Come, My Love)

I wish I were on yon green hill, 'Tis there I'd sit and cry my fill, And ev- er- y Tear would Turn a mill. My dar- ling and my life has gone a- way.
Come, come come my love, Now death a- lone can end my pain Don't leave me here to mourn a- lone Come safe ev- er to my arms a- gain.

SHULE AROON (Come, My Love)

I wish I were on yon green hill.
'Tis there I'd sit and cry my fill,
And every tear would turn a mill.
My darling and my life has gone away.

Refrain:

Come, come, come my love,
Now death alone can end my pain.
Don't leave me here to mourn alone,
Come safe forever to my arms again.

I'll sell my rack, I'll sell my reel,
I'll sell my only spinning wheel,
To buy my love a sword of steel.
My darling and my love has gone away.

Refrain

I'll dye my petticoats, I'll dye them red,
And round the world I'll beg my bread,
For the lad that I love from me is fled,
My darling and my love has gone away.

Refrain

But now my love has gone to France,
To try his fortune to advance.
If he come back, 'tis but a chance.
My darling and my love has gone away.

Refrain:

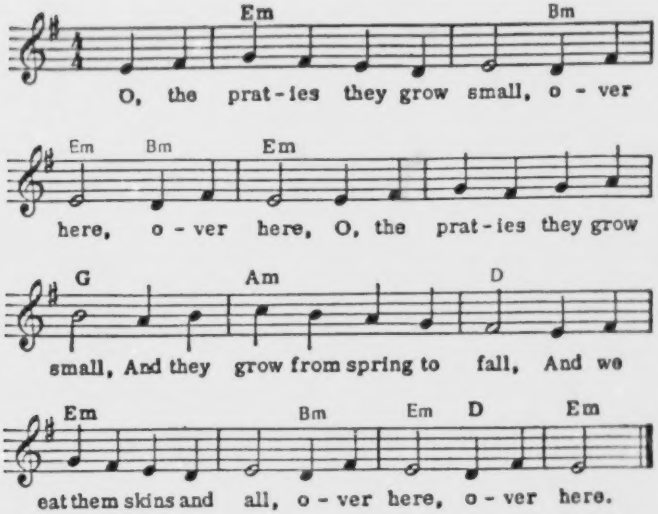
Come, come, come, my love,
Now death alone can end my woe.
Don't leave me here to mourn alone.
My darling and my life, I love you so.

I wish, I wish, I wish in vain,
That he'd come home and ease my pain,
And vainly think I'd not complain
To find him in my arms and safe again.

Refrain:

Come, come, come, my love,
Now death alone can ease my woe.
Don't leave me here to mourn alone,
My darling and my love, I love you so.

THE PRATIES they GROW SMALL



Oh, the praties they grow small, over here, over here,
Oh, the praties they grow small,
And they grow from spring to fall,
And we eat them skins and all, over here, over here.

Oh, I wish that we were geese, night and morn, night and morn,
Oh, I wish that we were geese,
For they fly and take their ease,
And they live and die in peace, over here, over here.

Oh, we're trampled in the dust, over here, over here,
Oh, we're trampled in the dust,
But the Lord in whom we trust,
Will give us crumb for crust, overe here, over here.

BIBLIOGRAPHY / CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Explore your state's resources and programs with respect to birds: for example, wildlife sanctuaries, breeding programs for endangered species, education programs at state parks and private preserves, bird watching facilities (e.g. at flyways), Audubon societies, natural history museums, publications and available literature, including guides to birds that inhabit or visit the state. Do not neglect resources of universities and colleges, including availability of tapes of birdsong.

One invaluable general reference for the U.S.A. as a whole is The National Geographic Society, Field Guide to the Birds of North America. Washington, D.C., no date. Dover Books (1809 Varick Street, New York, N.Y. 10014) offers in its 'Dover Books on Nature' series studies of bird behavior and records of birdsong. For an ambitious and comprehensive work of reference see Jean Dorst, The Life of Birds (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974, 2 vols., reprinted 1982). Jean Dorst, a famous French ornithologist, is an officer of the International Council for Bird Preservation. The excellent translation is by I.C.J. Galbraith.

Specific projects for student research might include selected species now endangered, notably the eagle, the peregrine falcon, the corncrake and the loon. Life histories of other species, such as the Canada goose or the humming bird, are not to be neglected. Another project of importance in building environmental awareness would be a study of wetlands and their role in the survival of birdlife. Some teachers may be interested in raising birds in the classroom -- e.g., bantams, doves and carrier pigeons. If you have experience here, please write and tell us about it.

A project of especial value is the fascinating story of the hawk and its domestication. This provides students with deep insight into the meaning of the agricultural revolution that began several thousand years ago and that changed the course of human history.

Life stories of naturalists and champions of conservation provide a fertile field for student exploration, e.g. John James Audubon, Frederick Law Olmsted and Henry David Thoreau. This country has produced many similar committed but little-known environmentalists. Records of their work are to be found in most of the states.

BACK ISSUES

NOTE Back volumes cost $7.00 per volume for an individual, $12.00 per volume for an institution. Single issues cost $2.50 (individual) or $4.00 (institution). There is a savings if you buy the entire set. Vol. I through XI costs $50.00 for an individual or $70.00 for a school, library, or institution. This also includes a subscription to Vol. XII.

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XII No. 2 Winter 19 92

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Editors: John W. Scott, John A. Scott, Laurie Seidman

Circulation Editor: Diana Palmer

Folksong, in our belief, constitutes primary source material for the study of our own and other cultures. The singing of these songs is a key to firing students' imaginations, arousing their curiosity, and helping them to focus upon a theme. Through use of folksong we apply the fundamental educational principle that by starting with the familiar, students can more easily approach the unknown and learn about the lives and struggles of people who have lived in the past or who live in the world of today. We seek to help bring into the classroom, at all educational levels, songs that have been sung in this country throughout its history as well as in other countries.

Folksong in the Classroom, a newsletter representing a network of teachers of English, history, music and the humanities, is published three times a year. Its purpose is to make available to the educational community the folk music which is our heritage and which we believe all young people should have access to. We are also concerned with discussing the nature and the origins of this heritage:- offering suggestions about its classroom use; reviewing books and records where appropriate; and providing supplementary material such as bibliographies, discographies and songsheets. Our materials may be reproduced for educational purposes without permission provided that Folksong in the Classroom and the given sources are credited.

Folksong in the Classroom welcomes news from teachers about their work, and queries. We also welcome articles to be considered for publication. Materials submitted for review will be acknowledged in print, but we cannot guarantee a review in all cases. Enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope if you wish to have materials returned.

Folksong in the Classroom is a voluntary association of working teachers operating pro bono publico without pay. Subscriptions constitute the sole source of income, and contributions are welcomed. Correspondence should be sent to John W. Scott: 229 Suffolk Street, Holyoke, MA 01041; queries regarding subscriptions, back issues and available material should be sent to Diana Palmer: 433 Leadmine Road, Fiskdale MA 01518.

Don Prockup. Castleton N.Y.

I am delighted with the newsletter. I have used folksongs and broadsides in the classroom for at least 15 years. I do play instruments a bit, but only to gain attention. It is the songs that are important. They convey empathy for people in a time and place, and of course they are all primary sources. Because I am a subject (social studies) coordinator, I encourage the use of music. [Don adds that he has "researched songs of the Anti-rent Wars of New York State in the early 19th century as a model for elementary, middleschool and senior high activities. I would be glad," he adds, "to share my songs and broadsides with you"].

* * * *

The Anti-rent Wars are an exciting and important episode in the history of New York State and its farming people. An issue of Folksong in the Classroom devoted to this topic might certainly be a useful one. We welcome reactions from readers.

* * * *

Jennie F. Rakestraw. School of Education, Georgia Southern.

I teach social studies courses at Georgia Southern and have been singing folk songs for years. I have used historical ballads in classrooms with children and introduced the concept of folk music as a part of the elementary social studies curriculum to my college students. I believe your publication could be very helpful to me.

* * * *

We certainly hope that you will find Folksong in the Classroom helpful. We would be interested to know more about your teaching. Do you, for example, conduct a course in folk song and its history? * * * *

Karen W. Arlen. Oakland, CA.

For a while there, I thought your publication was slipping. It is now back to its vital, informative self. Thank you for your fine series which I have enjoyed over the years. * * * *

In order to keep up standards and expand our horizons, we need and welcome criticism of our work. Specific details as to what you found inadequate would be helpful.

* * * *

Jackie Marlin. Georgetown Day School, Washington D.C.

I'm going to try to put together an 8th grade elective to complement the American History Course - for students who

are interested in seeing part of our history through song. I have a feeling you've done all my leg work for me!

* * * *

This will be for you a good way to get started and to gain experience in using song in your classes. Hopefully, in time, you will put aside the elective and integrate the songs into the American History Course itself.

* * * *

Judy Stock. New Orleans, LA.

I really enjoy the magazine.I've been a performing musician for 15 years and for the past 7 years I've been singing for children and young adults....Your magazine has given me lots to work with. One of the grants this year is to help children write their own songs. * * *

In our view there is a very close connection between introducing children to traditional songs and inspiring their own literary efforts. The old songs provide models which young people may first imitate and then surpass.

* * * *

Thomas Atten. Bainbridge, N.Y.

How about some immigrant folksongs? * * *

During our first decade of publication we paid little attention to immigrant songs other than the classical ballads from the British Isles. We plan to devote a number of issues to this topic in the period to come. Vol. XII #2 is the first of these.

* * * *

Priscilla A. Ord. Farmville, VA.

The American Folklore Society meets this October 17-20 in St. John's, Newfoundland. Have you thought of trying to "hawk" your product there? * * *

None of the Folk Song in the Classroom staff (to our regret) have been able to attend the St. John's meeting. Though indeed we are available to conduct seminars for teachers, and though we attend as many professional meetings as we can, we rely upon our readers, in the last resort, to "hawk" the product by showing it to their colleagues when and wherever they can.

* * * *

EAB South Pasadena, CA.

Thank you for continuing to send FITC even tho' I haven't

paid in a long time. I brag about your newsletter all the time. Keep up the great work! * * * *

See our response to Priscilla Ord's letter. Please keep on bragging about the newsletter if you think that it is something to brag about. We apologize to people who complain that we do not bill them promptly enough when their subscriptions run out. Dunning letters cost money and are time-consuming. We'll try to do a little better in the future. Apologies to DS (Richfield OH) and JC (Lowell IN) for not cancelling subscriptions in timely fashion when requested to do so.

* * * *

Jeff Davis. Cambridge, MA.

FITC seems to get better with every issue. More songs, more information, interesting angles and topics. The magazine has always been good, but is becoming invaluable for teachers because it provides such easy access to the material. Keep up the good work! * * * *

Thanks, Jeff. Providing easy access to great teaching sources is exactly what we are about.

* * * *

Sue Rosenthal. Philadelphia, PA.

Enjoyed the last issue ("Songs of the Soldiers," Spring 1991) immensely. Keep on. You deserve a medal or whatever.

* * * *

Thanks, Sue. We do have medals from past wars, but they are gathering dust among the pens, pencils, rubber bands, thumb tacks and penny papers in the desk drawer. See the letters to Priscilla Ord and EAB above, and do what you can to make the newsletter known to friends and colleagues who might benefit from it.

* * * *

Jan C. Gomersall. St. Stephen, N.B.

I am a Canadian and I appreciated your Fall 1990 Newsletter on the Songs of Newfoundland ...I did not really appreciate the statement on page 7 which said that "Canadian people are Americans with a history of their own." I would like to think that the word "North" was accidentally omitted! I teach grade 4 in the St. Stephen Elementary School. * * * *

Correction accepted; we are sorry for the omission. ■

Introduction

If American history is in itself an epic story of vast proportions, it is also made up of innumerable lesser stories that are not only of enormous interest in their own right but also indispensable for a comprehension of the whole. We may call these lesser stories 'mini-epics.'

Such mini-epics are properly the subject of scripts such as the one which we present in this issue, Vol. XII #2. The story is told in terms at once human and dramatic; as a literary form it borrows not a little from the epic tradition of western literature -- e.g., the Odyssey, the Aenead, Beowulf and the Song of Roland. Three principal elements are apparent in such literature: the telling of a tale, the recitation of poetry and the singing of songs. These epics were composed and recited by historians called bards, seanachies, or storytellers. Generations of these bards handed on for a thousand years or more, by word of mouth, the legends of their country or their people. The picture they presented was filled with the deeds of heroes (usually male), dark with anger, sorrow and bloodshed, bright with the colors of everyday living and its joys.

The purpose of scripts like "Irish Immigration" is to introduce an historical theme through the recitation of an episode vivid enough to illuminate that theme brightly. These scripts aim at an objective presentation based upon original sources which are relied upon to speak for themselves. In teaching by this means we hope only for a single outcome: that the script will inspire the student with curiosity to know more about a topic and a people that may be entirely new to him or her. In this kind of teaching we cast our bread upon the waters, as it were. Conventional tests are hardly possible, nor are they desirable. The test lies in the act: the acting of reading, singing and acting; it lies in the questions that students raise, the discussions that they enter into and the creative work that they themselves are inspired to undertake.

Arousing student curiosity is a teaching objective rarely mentioned in the manuals, but we suggest that it is the most important objective of all. Our task is to validate a subject matter in human terms, to provide materials which can enable students to develop the latent power of their own imaginations: to see, hear, and feel the lives of others. This power to imagine, to move freely in time and space, is a key to the comprehension of the world. When such curiosity

is aroused, the battle for learning is already half won.

Scripts of the type that we reproduce here are made to order for student participation in the classroom. All that students need is a copy of their own. This script, though copyrighted, may be reproduced by teachers in as many copies as they need, without any further obligation than to acknowledge the source from which it came. Students in the classroom will join in with enthusiasm to read the narrations, to recite the poetry, and to sing the songs. Some students, in our experience, emerge as teachers: they will teach the songs to their fellow students and lead them in the singing.

A script like "Irish Immigration" may not only be used in class but performed on the stage. It is one example of many scripts that we have used with students. We hope that it will provide a model for other scripts that students and teachers together may decide to write. The topics in history teaching which lend themselves to this type of treatment are nearly inexhaustible. The narrative form is appropriate for students at all grade levels from 5th grade up.

Irish Immigration through its Songs and Ballads was first performed by my 12th grade students of the Fieldston School in New York City March 18-20 1963. Bill Bonyun, Maine folksinger, taped the performance, and from this tape the students made a record. The illustrations for the program notes for the performance and for the record liner were drawn by Jena Gerard; they are reproduced on page 9. Concerning these illustrations Beth Bryant wrote the following in an article that she published in Folk Music:

> "A talented girl was elected to design the program cover. [She drafted] a large ship, from which a stream of small, faceless people emerged. Months later, after the production, she was asked to adapt her drawing to the record liner. This time she sketched a small ship on the horizon. The people, drawn in detail, grew larger as they stepped into the foreground. Asked why she had changed the proportions so drastically, she replied: 'I guess before the people weren't so important to me. Now they are.'"

8

Irish Immigration through its Songs and Ballads

presented by the
American History
Classes
•
Fieldston School
March 18, 1963
March 20, 1963

Record Liner

Program Notes

History of the Irish Immigration: Script Summary

The history of Eire is one of long struggle against poverty and foreign domination. From colonial times on, oppression and misery obliged many to leave their homeland and to seek refuge elsewhere.

Eire has been inhabited since the fifth century by the Gaels -- Celtic tribes who had wandered into the country at different times and from various places. These peoples did not create a unified central state. Thus successive invaders, Danish, Norman and English, had little difficulty in securing footholds on the island and robbing its inhabitants of their land.

Step by step over the centuries the rebellious Irish were subjugated and reduced to a condition approaching slavery. But the Irish did not accept subjugation without a long, bitter struggle. In the 18th century a new nationalism began to arise. It received inspiration and support first from the American Revolution and then the French Revolution.

New Irish uprisings took place; the British crushed them with merciless severity. Even before the great famine of 1845-50 the chief alternatives to slow starvation were emigration or mercenary service (for the men) in the British army. During the years of the potato blight, when one million Irish died of starvation and disease, the stream of emigrants became a flood. The voyage was tedious and dangerous. In 1847 alone one in five of the emigrants, or 17,000 in all, died at sea.

North America was the land where most of these people finally found a home. They brought with them beautiful, haunting and passionate songs, many of them sung in the lyrical tones of their ancient Gaelic tongue. Through these songs the Irish people themselves tell us their long history of struggle, the sorrows that they endured and the enormous love which they felt for the land of their birth.

Irish Immigration: Script

Narrator 1 Eire stands, hammered by the long Atlantic breakers, at the western bound of Europe. A land of mist and moor and forest, it has been for thousands of years the home of the Gaels.

Narrator 2 In the fifth century St. Patrick brought Christianity to Eire and for many years the Irish lived in peace. In the eleventh century Brian Boru ruled over a united land and called himself Emperor.

Narrator 3 It was Eire's calamity to be weak when her foes were strong. In 1004 the Normans invaded. Little by little, over the centuries, the English fastened their grip on Eire and destroyed the country's independence.

Narrator 4 Irish resistance continued. In the 17th century Oliver Cromwell resolved to end it once and for all. The Irish will long remember Cromwell's massacre at Drogheda [Droiyeda], the villages that he burned, the women and children and priests that he put to the sword.

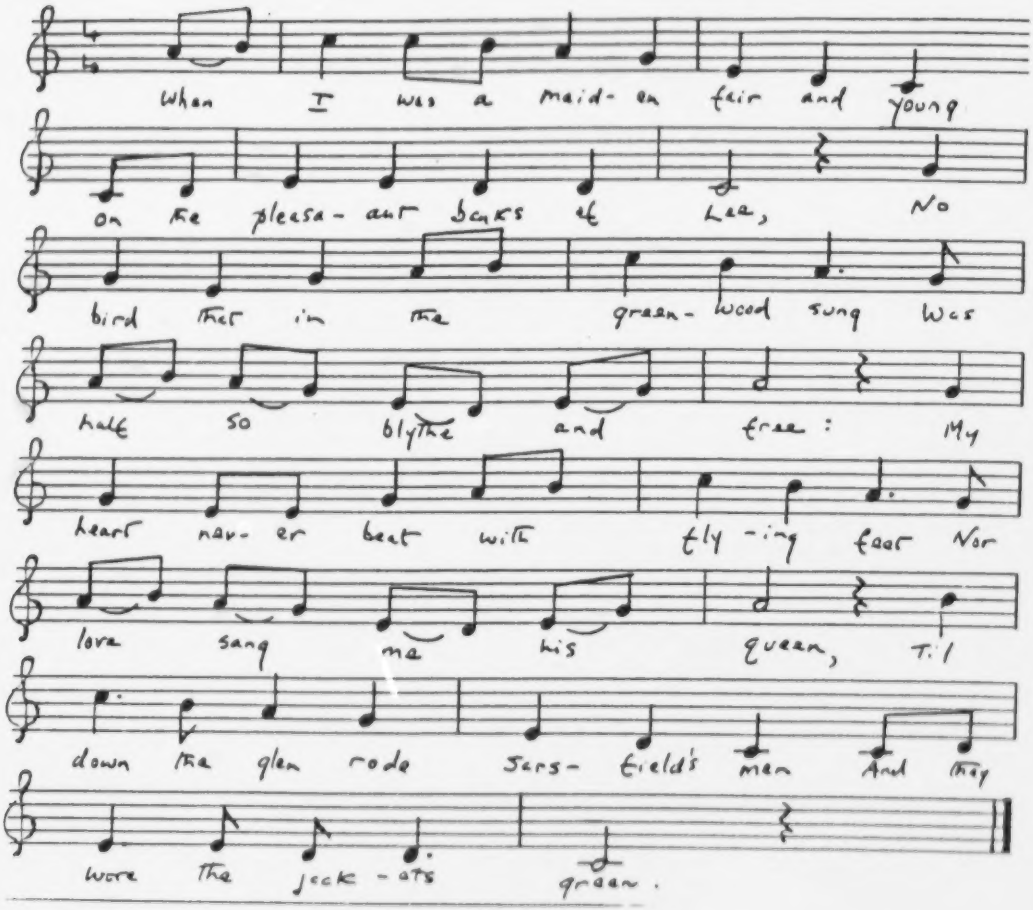
Narrator 5 Cromwell decreed that all the Irish land, save only the rocks of Connacht, was forfeit to England. The harps were smashed; women and orphaned children were sold into slavery in America. Henceforth the Irish people would draw water and hew wood for English and Irish overlords.

Narrator 6 Outlaws, with a price on their heads, roamed the Irish hills, holding to a stubborn dream. In 1689 rebellion flamed and was broken by William, king of England. This war was called the War of the Two Kings because French troops arrived to aid the Irish under the leadership of James Stuart, the deposed king of England. One Irish hero was Patrick Sarsfield, who defended the fortified town of Limerick on the River Shannon.

THE JACKETS GREEN (solo, a cappella): a lament for Donal, who fell at Garryowen's walls during the siege of Limerick in 1790. For melody and lyrics, see pages 11 and 12.

Narrator 7 By the beginning of the 18th century England's colonies in America were rising into nationhood. But England's Irish colony was defeated utterly. The Protestant lords in Dublin passed a penal code to make the defeat of a Catholic country clear for all to see:

(continued, page 13)

The Jackets Green

When I was a maid- en fair and young
On the pleasa- ant banks of Lee, No
bird that in the green- wood sung Was
half so blythe and free: My
heart nev- er beat with fly -ing feet Nor
love sang me his queen, Til
down the glen rode Sars- field's men And they
wore the jack - ets green.

When I was a maiden fair and young
On the pleasant banks of Lee,
No bird that in the greenwood sung
Was half so blythe and free:
My heart never beat with flying feet
Nor love sang me his queen,
Til down the glen rode Sarsfield's men
And they wore the jackets green.

No hoarded wealth did my love own
 Save thee broadsword that he wore,
But I loved him for himself alone
 And the color bright that he wore;
For had he come in England's red
 To make me England's queen,
I'd roam the high hills here instead
 For the sake of the Irish green.

When William stormed with shot and shell
 At the walls of Garryowen,
In the breach of death my Donal fell
 And he sleeps beneath the treaty stone.
That breech the foeman never crossed
 While he swung his broadsword keen,
But I do not weep for my darling lost
 For he wore the jacket green.

Oh Ireland, sad is my lonely soul,
 And loud beats the wintry sea;
But sadder and higher the Irish moan
 And our hearts still break for thee;
Yet grief shall come to a heartless foe
 And their throne in the dust be seen!
So Irish maids, love none but those
 That wear the jackets green.

---

note on discography of Irish traditional song:

There are a limited number of recordings of traditional Irish songs available in this country on cassettes and CDs. The material that we have examined so far is not very satisfactory from the teacher's point of view. No songnotes are provided, nor are the lyrics reproduced, Time further, is needed to examine all these offerings with the necessary care and to select those that appear to be worthwhile. We hope to complete this job shortly and to be able to provide you with a report in a forthcoming issue of Folksong in the Classroom.

Narrator 10

No Catholic may vote or hold political office.

No Catholic may teach school, and no Catholic child may attend a Catholic school.

No Catholic bishop may remain in his native land penalty of death. No Catholic may bear arms.

Narrator 11 Thus Ireland was ground down into illiteracy, ignorance and poverty.

In the sloping fields, under the blue hills, the peasants planted their potatoes, the staff of life, the symbol of poverty. Their heroes were humble Catholic priests who braved death for the sake of their people; and the tales that they told at night, under the cabin thatch, were of outlaws.

Small group and chorus BRENNAN ON THE MOOR
(for melody and lyrics, see pages 14 and 15)

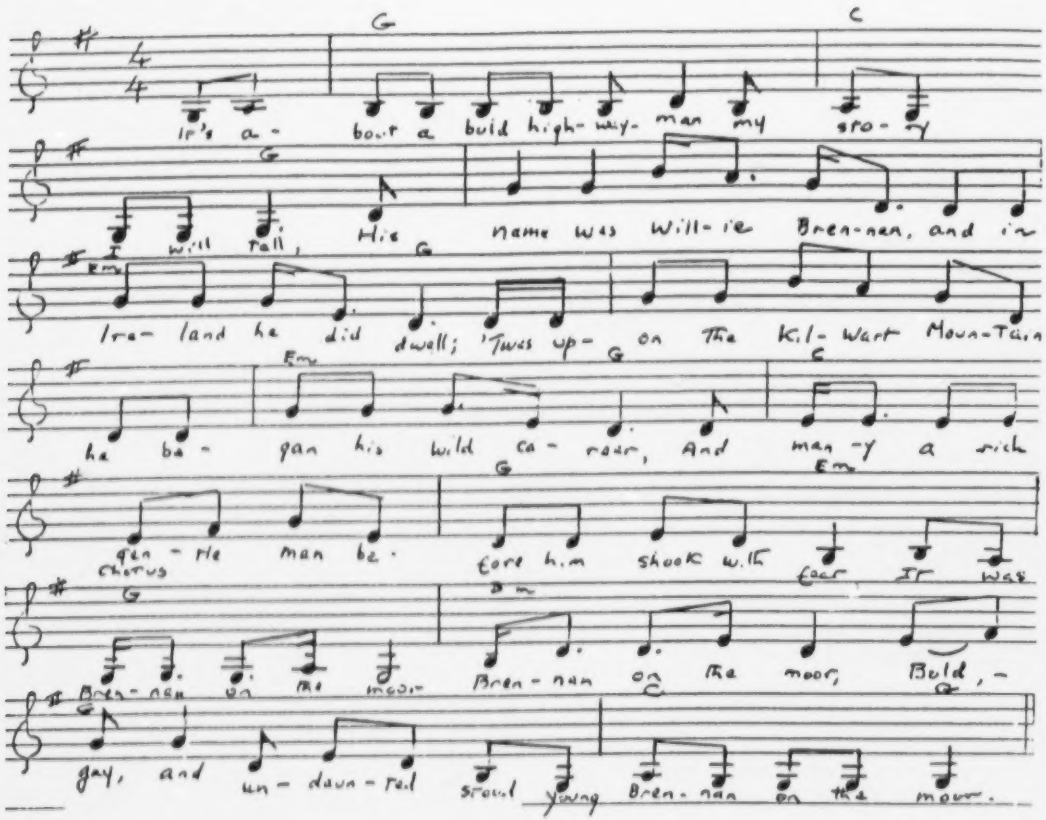
Narrator 11 The Irish dream was a stubborn dream. Sword in hand, the Irish people would one day rise against English and Anglo-Irish tyrants, just as they had risen in 1690. In 1775 the shot fired at Bunker Hill, and that echoed around the world, echoed nowhere more loundly than in Ireland. Now, surely, a king's son would come again from across the sea to help the old woman, Ireland, or, as some called her, Caitilin Ni Uallachain (Cathaleen Ni Houlihan).

Narrator 12

Our hopes run high, the time is nigh
To make the test of war.
Our plans are laid, our weapons made
And soon our guns will roar.
Let others sleep! We watch will keep
To hail a new day's dawn,
When the King's son shall be seen with Cathaleen
Ni Houlihan.

Our hated foes must not suppose
That we shall fear to die,
Though the clouds are dark we still can mark
God's rainbow in the sky.
As the Red Sea sand became dry land
When Moses led Israel on,
May Jesus save thee, Cathaleen
Ni Houlihan!

(continued on page 15)

Brennan on the Moor

It's a- bout a bold high- way- man my sto- ry I will tell;
His name was Will- ie Bren- nan, and in
Ire- land he did dwell; 'Twas up- on the Kil- wart Moun- tain
he be- gan his wild ca- reer, And man- y a rich
gen- tle man be- fore him shook with fear It was
Bren- nan on the moor, Bold, -
gay, and un- daun- ted stood young Bren- nan on the moor.

It's about a bold highwayman my story I will tell,
His name was Willie Brennan, and in Ireland he did dwell;
'Twas upon the Kilwart Mountains he began his wild career,
And many a rich gentleman before him shook with fear,

chorus

It was Brennan on the moor, Brennan on the moor,
Bold, gay and undaunted stood young Brennan on the moor.

One day upon the highway young Brennan he went down,
He met the mayor of Cashel five miles outside the town;
Now the mayor he knew Willie, "And I think," says he,
Your name is Willie Brennan, you must come along
with me,

Chorus

Now Willie got his blunderbuss, my story I'll unfold,
He caused the mayor to tremble and deliver up his gold,
Five thousand pounds was offered for his apprehension
there,
But he with horse and saddle to the mountains did repair,

Chorus

Now Willie is an outlaw all on some mountain high,
With infantry and cavalry to take him they did try,
But he laughed at them and scorned them, until,
as it was said,
By a false-hearted woman he was cruelly betrayed,

Chorus

Now Willie hung at Clonmel, in chains he swung and
died,
But still they say that in the night, some do see him ride;
They see him with his blunderbuss, and on the midnight
chill,
Along the Clonmel highway rides Willie Brennan still,

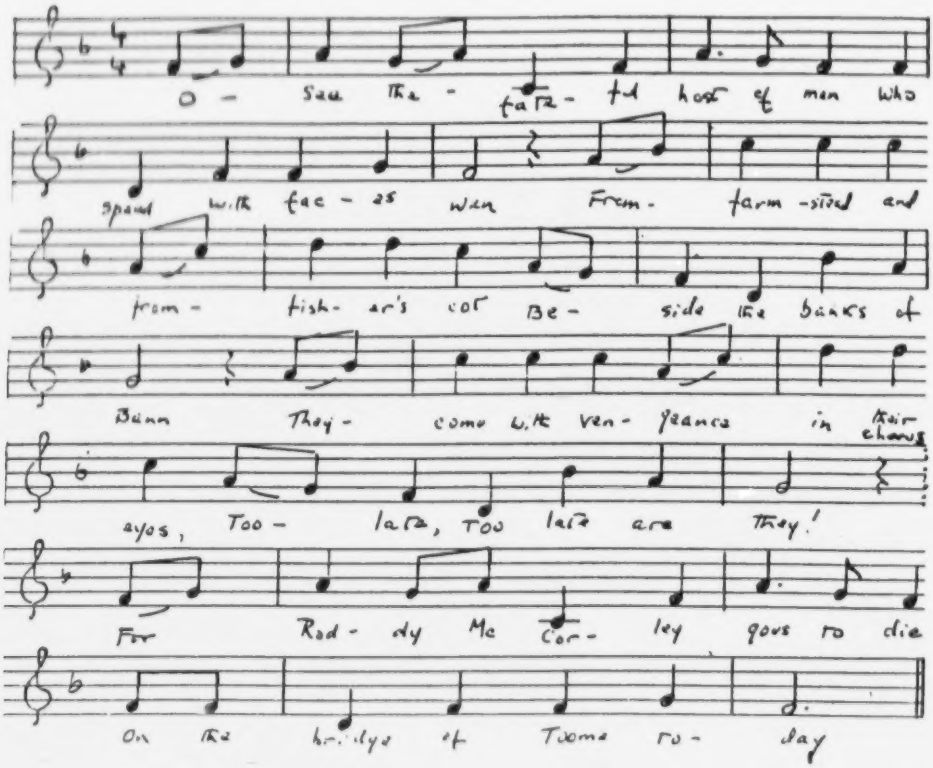
Chorus

---

cont. from p. 13

Narrator 13 The French Revolution broke out in 1789, just one hundred years after the War of the Two Kings. Preaching death to tyrants and tyranny the Revolution brought Ireland's simmering revolt to open flame under the leadership of Wolfe Tone, a Protestant. Once again, in 1798, English repression, with the help of the pitiless Orange gangs, laid the cause of independence in the dust. Irish cottages were burned; the inhabitants were hung in their own dooryards.

16 Narrator 14 Five years after the rebellion had been put down the English were still hanging its leaders. One of these was a young man from County Antrim named Roddy McCorley. (script continued page 18)

Singers and small chorus RODDY MCCORLEY

O - See the - fate - ful host of men who
speed with fac - es wan From - farm - stead and
from - fish - er's cot Be - side the banks of
Bann They - come with ven - geance in their eyes
Too - late, too late are they!
For Rod - dy Mc Cor - ley goes to die
On the bridge of Toome to - day

O see the fateful host of men
Who speed with faces wan
From farmstead and from fisher's cot
Beside the banks of Bann
They come with vengeance in their eyes,
Too late, too late are they!

chorus For Roddy McCorley goes to die
On the bridge of Toome today.

Up the narrow street he stepped
Smiling proud and young
About the hemp rope round his neck
The golden ringlets hung;
There is never a tear in his blue eyes
Both glad and bright are they;

chorus

When he last stepped up that street
His shining pike in hand,
Behind him marched in grim array
A stalwart endless band;
For Antrim town for Antrim town,
He led them to the fray;

chorus

There is never a one in all your dead
More bravely fell in fray
Than he who marches to his fate
On the bridge of Toome today;
True to the last, true to the last,
He treads the upward way,

chorus

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Narrator 15 In 1801 the English enacted the Act of Union which united Ireland with England and subjected the Irish people to laws passed by the English parliament far away in Westminster. In the green fields by the blue mountains the Irish people worked their little scraps of land, just as before. Many, too, toiled on land that was not their own and sank deeper into hunger, poverty and debt.

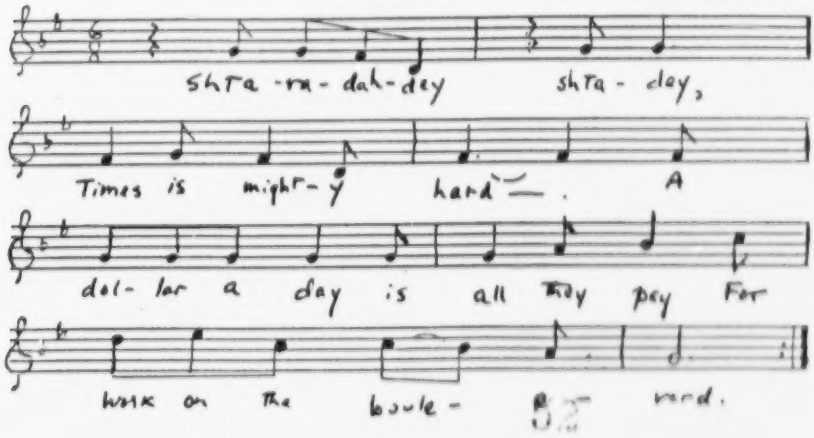
Narrator 16 What, in this situation, were the choices that faced young Irish people?

Narrator 17 A young man might join the British Army and, for pay, fight battles not his own. Here he could suffer a fate worse than death and end up both as a beggar and a cripple. The story of many such men, who fought for Britain during the wars against Napoleon and Spain from 1800 to 1814, is told in a famous street song sung in Dublin.

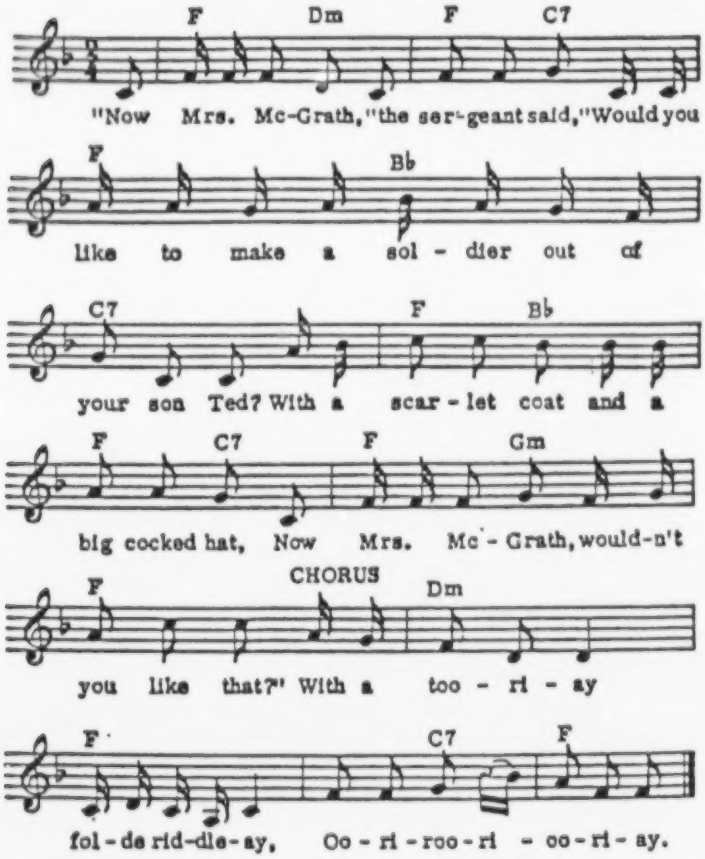
Duet and Chorus MRS MCGRATH (see page 19, 20)

Narrator 18 Rather than face hunger and beggary, young men and women might emigrate. The new American Republic had kicked over the English traces. It was a symbol of equality and freedom. It offered jobs and bread. Thus when peace came to Europe in 1814 the Irish began to stream to North America to dig canals, to build railroads, to work in textile mills. Life in the new land was hard and dangerous, and the pay was low.

SHTARADAHDEY (a cappella)



Mrs. McGrath

19

F Dm F C7
"Now Mrs. Mc-Grath," the ser-geant said, "Would you
F Bb
like to make a sol - dier out of
C7 F Bb
your son Ted? With a scar - let coat and a
F C7 F Gm
big cocked hat, Now Mrs. Mc - Grath, would-n't
CHORUS
F Dm
you like that?" With a too - ri - ay
F C7 F
fol - de rid-dle-ay, Oo - ri - roo - ri - oo - ri - ay.

So Mrs. McGrath lived by the seashore
For the space of seven long years or more,
Till a great big ship came a-sailing in the bay:
"Oh it's my son Ted who's been so long away!"
Chorus

"Oh captain dear, where have you been,
Have you been a-sailing on the Mediterreen?
And have you any news of my son Ted,
Is the poor boy living, or is he dead?"
Chorus

Then up stepped Ted without any legs,
And in their place were two wooden pegs;
She kissed him a dozen times or two,
"Holy Moses, it isn't you!"
Chorus

"Oh, were you drunk or were you blind,
When you left your two fine legs behind?
Or was it from walking on the seas
Tore your two fine legs away at the knees?
Chorus

"I wasn't drunk, and I wasn't blind
When I left my two fine legs behind;
But a cannon ball on the fifth of May
Tore my two fine legs at the knees away,"
Chorus

"Teddy, my dear," the widow cried,
Your two fine legs were your mother's pride;
These two stumps of a tree won't do at all,
Why didn't you flee from the big cannon ball?"
Chorus

"All foreign wars I do proclaim,
Against Napoleon and the King of Spain;
And by Heaven, I'll make them rue the time,
When they swept the legs from a child of mine,"

Chorus

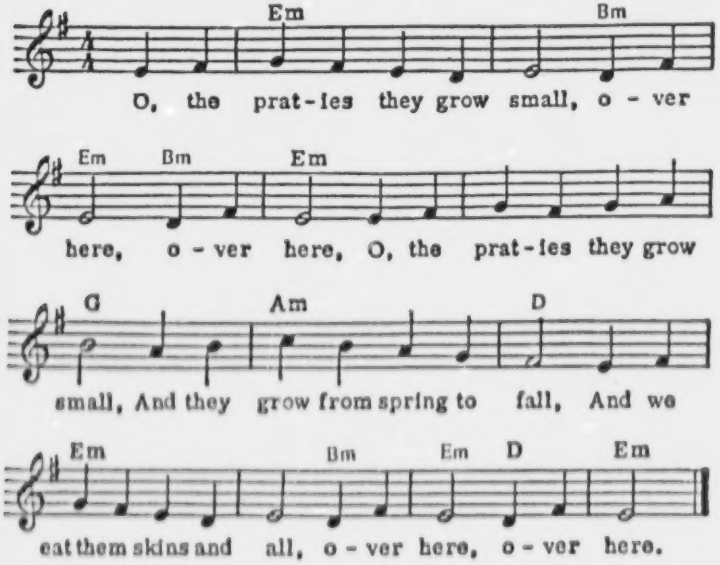
Vocabulary: proclaim: curse, denounce
rue: regret

continued from p. 18

Narrator 19 In 1846 famine came to Ireland. The stream of emigration turned into a flood.

The mass of the Irish people were so poor that the potato patch was all that stood between them and starvation. But the potato's yield was uncertain. In 1845 the rot set in and did not cease to infest the crop until 1850. In that five-year period over one and one-quarter million Irish died of cold, hunger and disease. A famine song "The Praties they Grow Small" tells of the sorrows and the yearnings and the faith of these people.

(small group) THE PRATIES THEY GROW SMALL 21



O, I wish that we were geese, night and morn, night and morn,
O, I wish that we were geese,
For they fly and take their ease,
And they live and die in peace, over here, over here.

O, we're trampled in the dust, over here, over here,
O, we're trampled in the dust,
But the Lord in whom we trust,
Will give us crumb for crust, over here, over here.

Narrator 20 They died in the fields, on the roads, in their cabins. Ragged skeletons with staring eyes roamed the countryside, holding out skinny hands for a crust or a blessing. One parish priest, Father O'Sullivan, cried out:

"Flesh and blood cannot bear up against it! The frightful objects that pursue me during the day actually haunt me in my dreams at night ....[May] God Almighty speedily take me to himself rather than longer be a witness to such an accumulation of misery."

Narrator 21 Listen to the chaoin [keen, or lament] of a mother for her son - of a mother who still had strength to mourn:

"Cold and silent is now your bed....No more will the print of your foot be seen in the morning dew on the mountain of Ivera, where so often you have hunted the fox and the hare, ever foremost among the young men. Cold and silent is now your bed. He who was everything to me is dead! He is gone for ever. He will return no more. Cold and silent is his repose."

Narrator 22 From 1846 to 1851, one and one half million Irish left their native land for ever. Necessity alone drove them from the land they loved. The memory would be a wound to follow them and theirs for ever.

Narrator 23 They sailed for North America, many in United States ships outward bound from Liverpool to New York, Philadelphia and Boston. Crossing the Atlantic on the packet ships and cargo boats of that day was a weary business at best, Time hung heavy in the long weeks at sea. In the cramped space between decks young people sang and danced as best they might. One of their favorite songs was an old ballad about the Devil and a farmer.

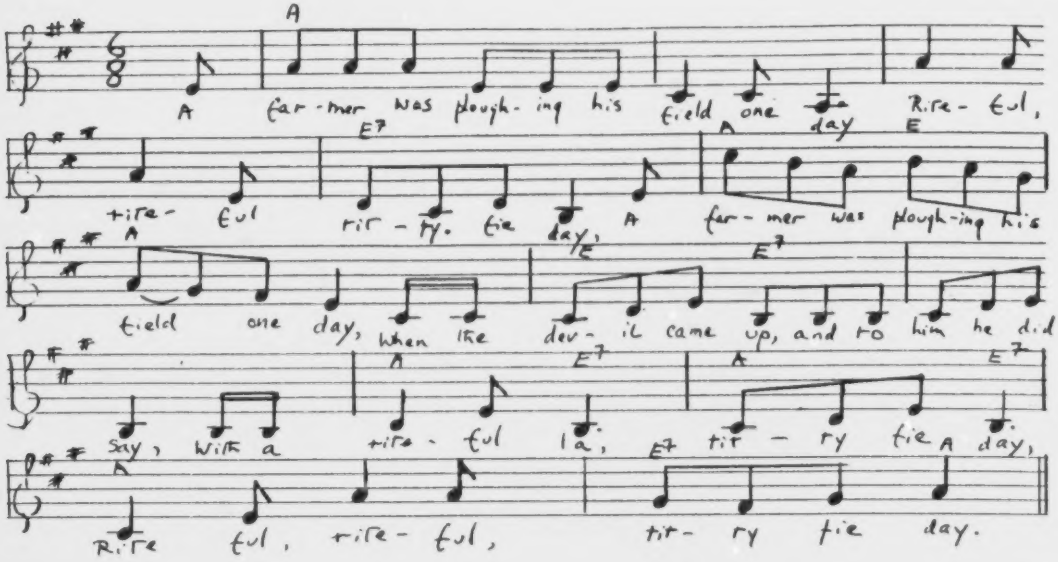
Solo & Chorus THE FARMER'S CURSED WIFE (see page 23)

Narrator 24 At its worst the Atlantic crossing was a hell on earth. In 1847, 17,000 Irish immigrants died at sea. This was 20%, or one of five of all who embarked for the trans-atlantic voyage. The survivors told tales of foul food and foul water, filth, overcrowding, brutal treatment and death.

Narrator 25 They landed in the American ports under the hostile eyes of native-born Americans: an endless, illiterate, verminous, disease-ridden stream of humanity.

Narrator 26 The contribution of these people to the American economy was a giant one.

Narrator 27 Irish workers provided the labor for canal digging and railroad building. In "To Work upon the Railway" one immigrant tells his story. Leaving Ireland in 1842, he lands in Canada, marries his sweetheart, Billie McGee, and comes south to the United States.

The Farmer's Cursed Wife

"See here my good man, I have come for your wife
Riteful, riteful, titty fie day,
See here my good man I have come for your wife,
For she's the bane and torment of your life,"
With a riteful la, etc.

So the Devil he hoisted her up on his back
Riteful, riteful, titty fie day,
So the Devil he hoisted her up his back
And down to Hell with her he did track
With a riteful la, etc.

When they got there the gates they were shut,
Riteful, riteful, titty fie day,
When they got there the gates they were shut,
With a blow of her hand she laid open his nut (head)
Riteful la, etc.

24

Two little devils were playing handball,
Riteful, riteful, titty fie day,
Two little devils were playing handball,
"Take her back Daddy, she'll be the death of us all!"
Riteful la, etc.

So the Devil he hoisted her up on his back
Riteful, riteful, titty fie day,
So the Devil he hoisted her up on his back
And back to earth with her he did trot
With a riteful la, etc.

"See here my good man, I have come with your wife,"
Riteful, riteful, titty fie day,
"See here my good man, I have come with your wife,
For she's the bane and torment of my life,"
Riteful la, etc.

Now they say that the women are worse than the men,
Riteful, riteful, titty fie day,
They say that the women are worse than the men,
They went down to Hell and got kicked out again,
Riteful la, etc.

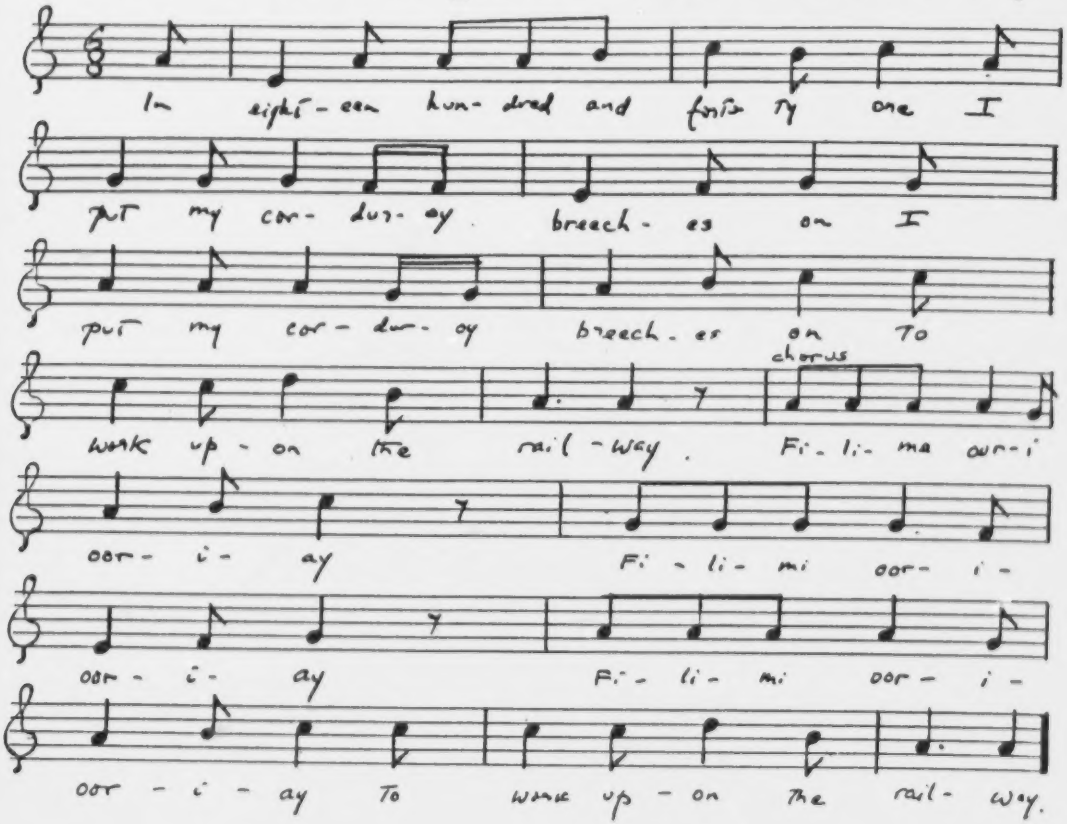
Script here continued from page 22

There he supports his family with hard, unremitting labor. When Billie dies in 1847 he turns to whisky for relief. In this song the gang's driving chorus provides a stirring contrast to the worker's quiet recitation of his life story.

TO WORK UPON THE RAILWAY

Narrator 2 Irish immigrants also brought with them from their native land a musical heritage of incomparable beauty. "The Jug of Punch," is a drinking song with a simple message: life is worth the struggle because its meaning lies in its joy.

Solo and Chorus THE JUG OF PUNCH see page 27

To Work upon the Railway

In eight-een hun-dred and forty one I
put my cor- dur- oy breech- es on I
put my cor- dur- oy breech- es on To
work up- on the rail-way. chorus Fi- li- ma oor- i
oor- i- ay Fi- li- mi oor- i-
oor- i- ay Fi- li- mi oor- i-
oor- i- ay To work up- on the rail- way.

In eighteen hundred and forty-one
I put my corduroy breeches on
I put my corduroy breeches on
To work upon the railway.
chorus fili-me-oori-oori-ay (three times)
to work upon the railway.

In eighteen hundred and forty-two
I left the Old World for the New
Bad cess to the luck that brought me through!
To work upon the railway!
chorus (cess luck)

In eighteen hundred and forty-three
'Twas then I married sweet Billie McGee
And an elegant wife she's proved to me
For working on the railway.
chorus

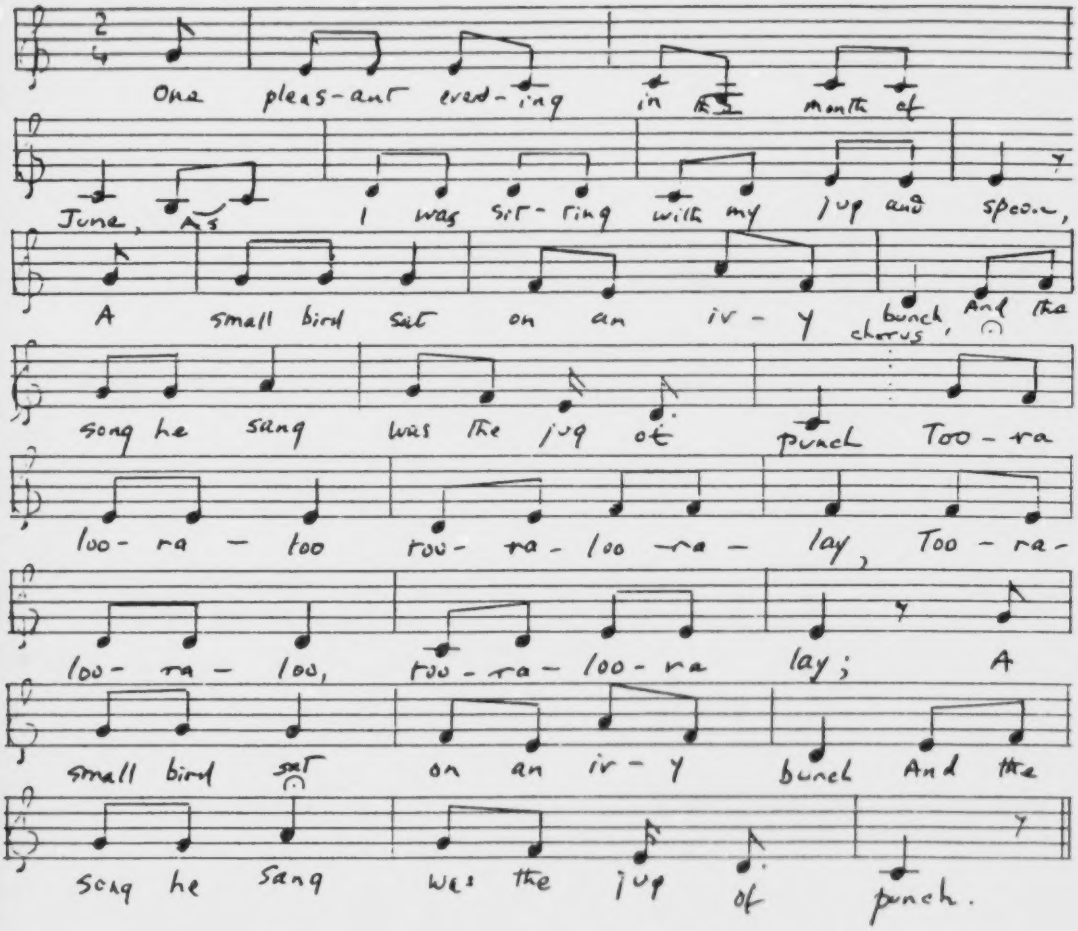
In eighteen hundred and forty-four
I landed on Columbia's shore
I landed on Columbia's shore
To work upon the railway.
chorus

In eighteen hundred and forty-five
I found myself more dead than alive
I found myself more dead than alive
From working on the railway.
chorus

In eighteen hundred and forty-six
A gang pelted me with stones and sticks
And then I was in a helluva fix
For working on the railway.
chorus

In eighteen hundred and forty-seven
Sweet Billie McGee she went to heaven
If she left one child she left eleven
To work upon the railway.
chorus

In eighteen hundred and forty-eight
I learned to take my whiskey straight
It's an elegant drink and can't be beat
For working on the railway.
chorus

JUG of PUNCH

One pleas-ant even-ing in the month of
June, As I was sit-ting with my jug and spoon,
A small bird sat on an ivy bunch, And the
song he sang was the jug of punch Too-ra
loo-ra-loo roo-ra-loo-ra-lay, Too-ra-
loo-ra-loo, roo-ra-loo-ra lay; A
small bird sat on an ivy bunch And the
song he sang was the jug of punch.
chorus

One pleasant evening in the month of June
As I was sitting with my jug and spoon
A small bird sat on an ivy bunch
And the song he sang was the jug of punch.

chorus

Too-ra-loo-ra-loo, too-ra-loo-ra-lay,
(twice: then repeat last two lines of verse

What more diversion can a man desire
Than to sit him down by an alehouse fire
And on his knee a pretty wench
And on the table a jug of punch.

chorus

The learned doctors with all their art
Cannot cure a depression of the heart
Even the cripple forgets his hunch
When he's snug outside of a jug of punch.

chorus

And when I'm dead and in my grave
No costly tombstone will I have
Just lay me down in my native peat
With a jug of punch at my head and feet.

chorus

THE EMIGRANTS Paul Laune

Introductory works on Irish history include T.A. Jackson, Ireland Her Own (New York: International Publishers, 1947) and Seumas MacManus, The Story of the Irish Race: A Popular History of Ireland (New York: Devin Adair, 1971). Cecil Woodham-Smith, The Great Hunger: Ireland 1845--1849 (New York: Harper and Row, 1962) is a classic account of the years of the Great Famine. Redcliffe Salaman, The History and Social Influence of the Potato (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), and Kerby A. Miller, Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985) are invaluable for reference. All the works cited in this paragraph are currently in print, with the exception of The Great Hunger.

Below we cite a number of invaluable sources for Irish folk music. Unfortunately none of them is currently in print. This raises the question of publishing additional issues of the Newsletter devoted to Irish songs.

An indispensable source for Irish folk song is Donal O'Sullivan Songs of the Irish; an Anthology of Irish Folk Music and Poetry with English Verse Translations (New York: Crown Publishers, 1960). O'Sullivan provides excellent melody lines, Gaelic originals and serviceable translations. He also imparts an astonishing amount of information about Irish history and Irish songwriters. The range of this anthology is also impressive - from exquisite lullabies like 'Deirin De' to bittersweet drinking songs like 'An Bunnan Bui' to the empassioned lyric of 'Roisin Dubh.'

Peter Kennedy, ed., Folksongs of Britain and Ireland (New York: Schirmer Books, 1975) makes available information about the history of Irish folk song; also melodies, texts in Gaelic and English, and notes, for more than twenty songs. Patrick Galvin, Irish Songs of Resistance (New York: Oak Publications, 1962), in a pioneer contribution tells the story of seven and a half centuries of struggle against England (1169-1923) with the help of fifty songs.

Colm O Lochlainn's Irish Street Ballads (New York: Corinth Book, 1960) brings together a fine collection of ballads based upon original broadsides and oral tradition. These lyrics are matched with melodies of great beauty. Note also Robert Wright, Irish Emigrant Ballads and Songs (Bowling Green OH: Bowling Green University Press, 1986).

The Jackets Green by Michael Scanlan, is here transcribed from the singing of Julie Garfield. Donal fell when the English bombarded the walls of Garryowen at the siege of Limerick in 1690; and he was buried beneath the stone upon which the Treaty of Limerick (ending the war) was signed in 1691. Patrick Sarsfield conducted the successful defense of the Shannon River town. The song is notable for its fine traditional melody, its bitter defiance, and its curse upon Ireland's foes.

Brennan on the Moor is one of the best-known Irish "bad man" ballads. Source: John Anthony Scott, The Ballad of America (Carbondale, IL: 1983).

Caitilin Ni Uallachain by Liam Dall (Blind William) of County Tipperary, is a famous patriotic song composed about 1720. Source: Donal O'Sullivan, Songs of the Irish (New York, 1960). Translation from the Gaelic by Donal O'Sullivan.

Roddy McCorley, by Ethna Carberry, tells of a leader in County Antrim (north eastern Ireland) in the rebellion of 1789. Taken prisoner by the British, Roddy McCorley was hanged at Toomebridge.

Mrs. McGrath This fine ballad is reproduced by Colm O. Lochlainn, Irish Street Ballads (New York, 1960) and also in Ballad of America, cited above.

Shtaradahdey This song is reproduced from Carl Sandburg, The American Songbag (New York, 1927).

The Praties They Grow Small. See Folk Song in the Classroom XI #1, "Fowls of the Air: Wild and Domesticated."

The Farmer's Cursed Wife (No. 278 of Francis James Child's collection of classic English and Scottish ballads) has been widely sung in the British Isles and North America. Reproduced in Ballad of America

Working on the Railway is a well-known Irish immigrant song reproduced in John A. and Alan Lomax, eds., Best Loved American Folk Songs (New York, NY: 1947).

The Jug of Punch, rarely reproduced in American song books, is here transcribed from the singing of Ellen Rafel.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Irish immigration is a topic that naturally kindles the interest of American young people. Both Americans and Irish were subjects of the British empire during the colonial period. Both peoples launched struggles for freedom; the great Irish struggle, the War of the Two Kings, took place nearly one century before the American War of Independence; and both peoples received military aid from the French. As may be seen, the outcome of these wars was a matter of life or death for the future of each people.

A classroom reading of a narrative script is a fine way to introduce the songs in the living historical context that inspired their creation or their use. You may duplicate as many copies of this issue as you please, but you will need a duplicating machine that handles legal size paper. Each issue requires 8 such sheets; the overall cost ought not to amount at most to more than 80 cents per student provided that the students collate and staple their own copies.

A first reading of the script requires no special preparation insofar as the songs are concerned; students may simply volunteer to recite a given song -- provided that they read it ahead of time and give thought to its meaning. As the script is read, each song receives attention at the proper place; the teacher, having first invited questions about vocabulary, may then initiate discussion of the song text, and may perhaps conclude this discussion with a second reading.

The students are likely to raise a number of questions during the course of a script reading; such questions should be examined and discussed at the time that they are raised. One possible conclusion arising out of this discussion may be that "we don't know enough: let's try and find out more." The bibliography (page 29) may provide some leads.

Delaying attention to the song melodies is necessary in the interest of analysis and comprehension, but it also whets student curiosity. Individual students may now volunteer to teach the melody of a given song to the class, and lead them in singing it. In some schools seeking the music teacher's help may evoke a ready response; you may also ask students and parents to help track down recordings of the songs. The script may finally be read again, but now with the students themselves singing the songs and joining in the choruses.

Good luck, have fun, and be in touch.

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FOLKSONG IN THE CLASSROOM

A NETWORK OF TEACHERS OF HISTORY, LITERATURE, MUSIC AND THE HUMANITIES - A NEWSLETTER

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Volume XII #3 Spring 1992

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TO OUR READERS
IT IS TIME TO PAY YOUR SUBSCRIPTION
FOR VOLUME XII, 1991 - 1992
PLEASE CONSULT YOUR MAILING LABEL FOR DIRECTIONS

Editors: John W. Scott, John A. Scott, Laurie Seidman

Circulation Editor: Diana Palmer

Folksong, in our belief, constitutes primary source material for the study of our own and other cultures. The singing of these songs is a key to firing students' imaginations, arousing their curiosity, and helping them to focus upon a theme. Through use of folksong we apply the fundamental educational principle that by starting with the familiar, students can more easily approach the unknown and learn about the lives and struggles of people who have lived in the past or who live in the world of today. We seek to help bring into the classroom, at all educational levels, songs that have been sung in this country throughout its history as well as in other countries.

Folksong in the Classroom, a newsletter representing a network of teachers of English, history, music and the humanities, is published three times a year. Its purpose is to make available to the educational community the folk music which is our heritage and which we believe all young people should have access to. We are also concerned with discussing the nature and the origins of this heritage:- offering suggestions about its classroom use; reviewing books and records where appropriate; and providing supplementary material such as bibliographies, discographies and songsheets. Our materials may be reproduced for educational purposes without permission provided that Folksong in the Classroom and the given sources are credited.

Folksong in the Classroom welcomes news from teachers about their work, and queries. We also welcome articles to be considered for publication. Materials submitted for review will be acknowledged in print, but we cannot guarantee a review in all cases. Enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope if you wish to have materials returned.

Folksong in the Classroom is a voluntary association of working teachers operating pro bono publico without pay. Subscriptions constitute the sole source of income and contributions are welcomed. Correspondence should be sent to John W. Scott: 229 Suffolk Street, Holyoke, MA 01041; queries regarding subscriptions, back issues and available material should be sent to Diana Palmer: 433 Leadmine Road, Fiskdale MA 01518.

Meg MacLeod. Asheville, N.C.

I was disappointed in the issue on soldiers' songs. We are living in a scary, desperate, important era. It seems to me that a problem with limiting an issue to songs of soldiers is that soldiers are trained to view the enemy as the "other" - as subhuman - to make it easier to kill with no outward remorse. Typical of this attitude is "How Stands the Glass Around," which states that soldiers must deaden themselves with booze to kill the pain they must be feeling. If booze doesn't work, then sex will. These are old, worn-out ideas...I guess I'm not interested in hearing that attitude once again, no matter what its origin....Sometimes traditional songs just don't have the needed paradigm shift away from these worn out concepts.

* * *

We profoundly agree with your point of view regarding war and peace as well as the need to propagate songs of peace and knowledge of the horror of war. This is a major reason why we published "Songs of the Soldiers," and "How stands the Glass Around" in particular. Where we disagree is in the interpretation of the song. First of all, as regards sexist implications, there is only one line referring to a woman - and that woman gives kindess without reference to sex. "A bottle and kind landlady cure all again." We believe the meaning of the song would change not at all if 'landlord' was substituted for 'landlady.' We would be willing to publish or sing it in that form. As to the deadening effect of liquor, the first lines of the song show that this medicine is not having the desired effect. Beyond that, we feel you miss the bitter sarcasm and bitterer pain in this traditional song. War, it says, is a trap: the soldier is helpless and does not possess even the illusion of power or control. As we pointed out in our commentary, this song was sung by British and American soldiers alike in the Revolutionary War. It laments the fate of any and all human beings caught helplessly in this no-win situation.

* * * *

Bruce McMurray. Hither Green, London, England.

I am enjoying getting "Folk Song in the Classroom." It makes interesting reading and confirms so much of what I believed was good practice when part of my job was providing education for mentally handicapped adult students.

We began initially by providing basic education, i.e, conversation, reading and writing skills, and this was greeted

enthusiastically by most students. It was obvious, though, that there were other areas to be tapped, and I managed to find a enthusiastic teacher, trained professional artist, and a musician keen to develop oral, keyboard, percussion and strings skills. Beginning with piano and a range of percussion instruments we taught rhythm and to aid the percussive noise (initially) used some folk songs. Suddenly here were people who had never created music in their lives, both singing and accompanying themselves and really enjoying it. Furthermore, all kinds of other benefits ensued - people who seldom spoke or appeared mute, began to sing and to use words. Music inspired the development of oral expression, and this in turn led to improved literacy. This work continues: it is now 16 years since we began, but now the care staff as well as the teaching staff sees the benefits.

* * * *

Greenwich, England is the home of one of the world's great maritime museums and libraries. The clipper ship, Cutty Sark, lies in dry dock by the Thames River; the narrow streets of this historic town are lined with maritime bookshops. After a tiring day cruising the town last summer, we contacted the local tourist bureau for a bed and breakfast and were given Bruce McMurray's number.

Bruce lives in a large brownstone with a circular driveway, stone carvings and spacious accomodations. He turned out to be a retired educator and a gracious host. We spent a few memorable hours learning about the British educational system and making a new friend. We hope in the not too distant future to return to Greenwich and renew our acquaintance with Bruce.

* * * *

Nancy Davis, Savannah, MO.

Love your work - I loan copies trying to encourage new subscriptions. Could we focus on a different state each issue? Would be like a special section.

* * * *

This is an interesting idea, and we will give it some thought. We have already dealt with regional song. like thata of the cowboy, river songs, etc. Would you be interested in working on a project like this?

* * * *

Lynn C. Bossone, Curtis School, Culver City, CA.

My 4th graders last year got so excited about Humphry's appearance again in San Francisco Bay that they wanted to

update a favorite song from your ecology volume. Thank you for all those inspiring and wonderful songs with so much background.

* * * *

Here are some of the verses Ms. Bossone's students wrote about HUMPHREY THE WHALE:

When Humphrey was first spotted it was 1985, and
everyone's excited that he is well and still alive.
We hope he'll just jump off that rock and take a great
big dive, and now it's time to take a ride on the wild tide.

That stubborn whale, that stubborn whale,
He keeps on coming back and now we're telling his tale.
Humphrey is a big one; he's forty feet long.
He keeps on coming back and now we're singing his song.

Humphrey's beached upon a rock, he was at sea so long.
Home is far away from him - the whale is all alone.
He doesn't have such good luck, the tide went in and out.
We've got to help him splash along, together with his spout.

Humphrey the whale, Humphrey the whale,
Waiting for some people to put a rope on his tail.
If the people do so, they'll pull him right out.
Then Humphrey will be free to play and swim and spout.

drawing of Humphrey.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CIVIL WAR TOUCH ITS SONGS and BALLADS

Americans continue to show intense interest in the history of the Civil War. Indeed, a minor industry exists in this country for the purpose of catering to this need. Perhaps it stems from the fact that the issues in the national life that caused the war have never to this day been resolved. We as teachers wish to speak to our students' fascination with this struggle while at the same time we do not stifle their enthusiasm by presenting excessive and often meaningless detail.

A case in point is Ken Burns' acclaimed The Civil War. The Public Broadcasting Service is now marketing The Civil War in the schools in the form of a 9-cassette videotape with approximately 7 1/2 hours playing time. The cost of this set is $180.00. A more elaborate package, designed for use with large groups of students and complete with index, teacher's manual, student handouts and battlefield map, is priced at $350.00.

This videotape will be a valuable resource for university libraries and film centers, where schedules are flexible and students have time to view a work like Burns', designed as it is upon so large a scale. In the high schools the situation is different. The Civil War is being marketed as a package deal and does not lend itself to flexible use. You must buy all the tapes or none; you cannot buy individual tapes tailored to fit your own time frame and classroom needs.

We believe that the study of the Civil War in high school and elementary school classes requires a different strategy -- a strategy that must not displace, but rather reinforce, the central principle of classroom learning; that students be involved actively in their own education. The scale on which the PBS story is designed is hardly compatible with most classsroom needs and opportunities.

Folk Song in the Classroom offers a more realistic alternative, given the severe time restraints that most teachers must work with: a Civil War script designed both for classroom use and for stage performance. It aims to tell its story primarily through the songs that the Americans who participated in the struggle themselves created. As a classroom tool the script is designed to involve the students directly in the learning process. No costly videotapes or teaching aids are required. Students: (continued on page 7)

* read the script ('text') aloud in class.

* recite prose and poetry.

* learn the songs, teach them to each other, discuss their meaning, and sing them.

* interrupt the unfolding of the script at any point, to ask questions and spark discussion.

The script introduces the students to the Civil War by revealing the humanity of the participants, by arousing compassion for the struggle they conducted, and by promoting understanding of the issues they sought to resolve. A single outcome is hoped for: is that this introduction to the subject, that is both human and dramatic, will stimulate the students' imaginative life and motivate them to learn more.

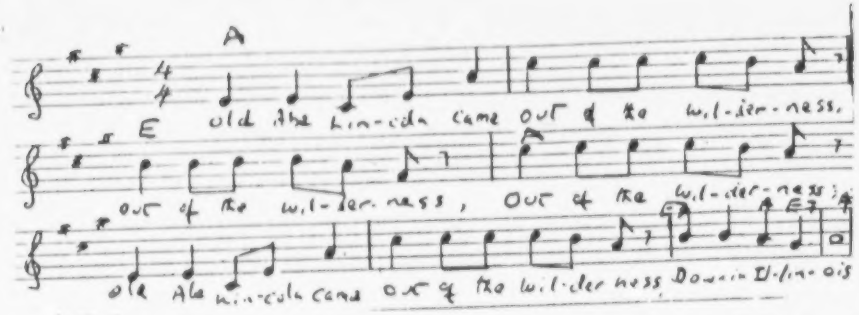
* * * *

THE CIVIL WAR THROUGH ITS SONGS AND BALLADS was created by seniors at the Fieldston School in New York City during the academic year 1960--61. The songs which the students sang were part of a heritage made available to them by a number of folklorists, singers and collectors, including Jean and Bill Bonyun, Anne and Frank Warner, H.M. Belden, Arthur Palmer Hudson and the great 19th century scholar, Frank Moore. The resources of the American Antiquarian Society were also drawn upon. Most of the songs which the students chose are reproduced below; "Lord Lovell" has been added. A school performance given on April 17 1961 lasted 40 minutes; the expanded script presented here will run a few minutes longer. This was the first offering in a music and history project that ran for seven years and was launched by John Anthony Scott, chair of the history department of the Ethical Culture Schools in New York City.

This script is appropriate for grades 7 through 12. A "Civil War" for upper elementary students will need to be edited for length and vocabulary.

* * * *

The illustration on page 29, "Storming Fort Wagner," is a Harper's Weekly woodcut reproduced from Irwin Silber, Songs of the Civil War.



source: Carl Sandburg, The American Songbag

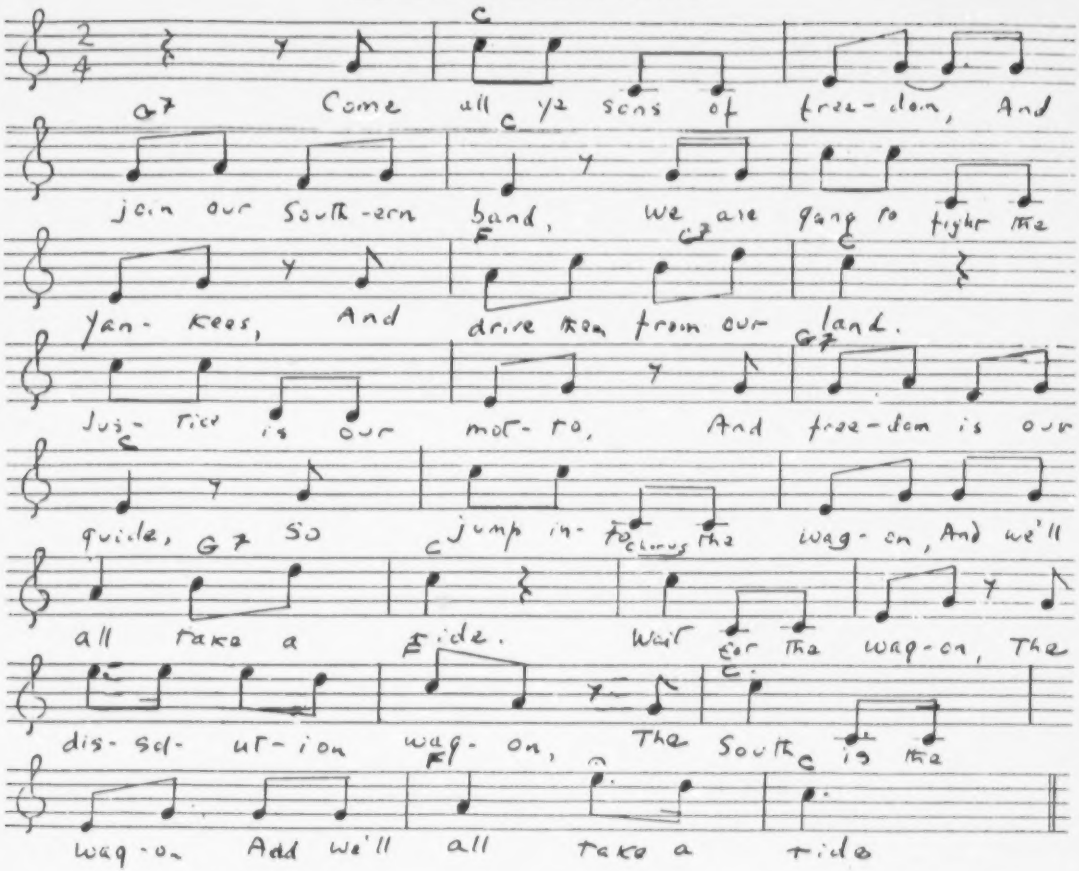
Narrator 1 In the summer and fall of 1860 people all across the North campaigned for Abraham Lincoln's election as 14th President of the United States. Millions had read Lincoln's speeches or had listened to the quiet, lanky man deliver them. "The great question before us," he said, "is slavery. You (the Southerners) think that slavery is right. We (the Northerners) think that it is wrong. That is the essence of the difference between us."

Narrator 2 The slaveholders stated clearly that they would take the South out of the Union if Lincoln were elected President. The western lands, said they, must be open to all comers, to men with slaves as well as to men without. Take away this right and the Union would be at an end.

Narrator 3 In November 1860 Lincoln was elected President by Northern votes. The Southern states then trooped out of the Union and formed the Confederate States of America. They proclaimed Jefferson Davis as their President and declared slavery to be the cornerstone of their way of life.

Narrator 4 On April 12, 1861 the Confederate Commander in Chief, General Pierre Beauregard, turned his guns on Fort Sumter, the Union stronghold in Charleston, S.C. harbor. Thus the Civil War began.

Narrator 5 As Southern soldiers marched to war they sang a song, 'The Dissolution Wagon,' that expressed their defiant mood. The war will be short and glorious, they told themselves; it will end in victory.

THE DISSOLUTION WAGON

Come all ye sons of freedom, And
join our South-ern band, We are going to fight the
Yan- kees, And drive them from our land.
Jus- tice is our mot- to, And free-dom is our
guide, So jump in- to the wag- on, And we'll
all take a ride. Wait for the wag-on, The
dis- so- lu- tion wag- on, The South is the
wag- on Add we'll all take a ride

Come all ye sons of freedom,
And join our Southern band,
We are going to fight the Yankees,
And drive them from our land.
Justice is our motto,
And freedom is our guide,
So jump into the wagon,
And we'll all take a ride.

Chorus So wait for the wagon,
The dissolution wagon,
The South is the wagon
And we'll all take a ride.

Secession is our watchword
Our rights we will demand;
To defend our homes and firesides
We pledge our hearts and hands.
Jeff Davis is our president,
With Stephens by his side,
Great Beauregard is our general,
He joins us in our ride.

Chorus

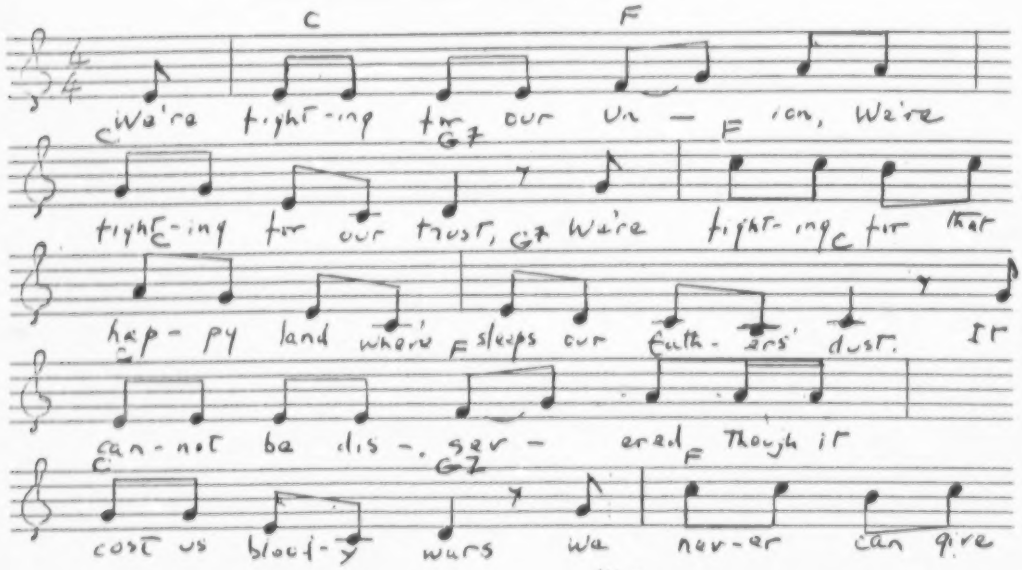
Our wagon is the very best;
The running gear is good;
Stuffed round the sides with cotton,
And made of Southern wood.
Carolina is the driver,
With Georgia by her side,
Virginia holds the flag up,
While we all take a ride.

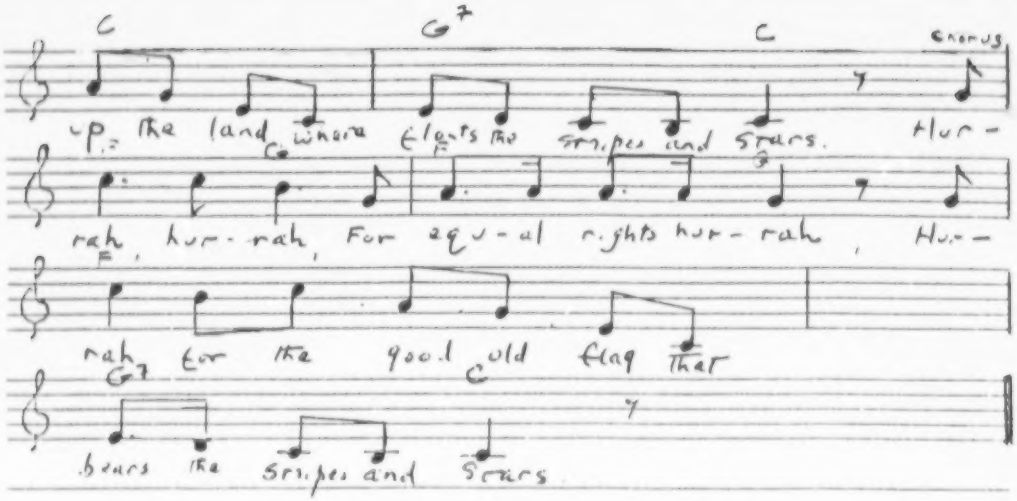
Chorus

(source: Frank Moore, Songs and Ballads of the Southern People)

Narrator 6 When the war began most Northerners cared little or nothing about the lives, the dreams and the sufferings of the slaves. This, they thought, was a white man's war in a white man's country, but they did care about the Union Northern soldiers took one of the South's most popular songs, 'The Bonny Blue Flag,' and rewrote the lyrics to suit their own feelings and to express their devotion to the Union.

THE NORTHERN BONNY BLUE FLAG


C
F
We're fight-ing for our Un - ion, We're
G7
fight-ing for our trust, We're fight-ing for that
C
hap - py land where F sleeps our fath - ers' dust. It
C
can - not be dis - sev - ered Though it
G7
cost us bloo-dy wars we F never can give



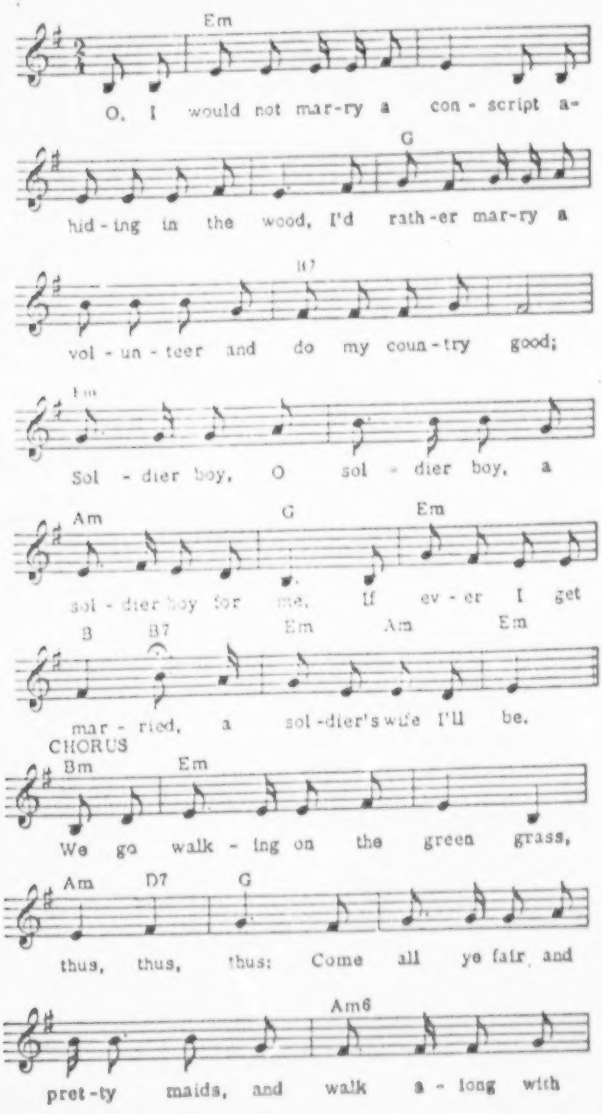
We're fighting for our Union,
We're fighting for our trust,
We're fighting for that happy land
Where sleeps our fathers' dust.
It cannot be dissevered
Though it cost us bloody wars
We never can give up the land
Where floats the Stripes and Stars.

Chorus Hurrah, hurrah,
For equal rights, hurrah,
Hurrah for the good old flag
That bears the Stripes and Stars.

We do not want your cotton,
We do not want your slaves,
But rather than divide this land
We'll fill your Southern graves.
With Lincoln for our chieftain,
We'll wear our country's scars
We'll rally round the brave old flag
Which bears the Stripes and Stars.

Chorus

(source: Frank Moore, Songs of the Soldiers)

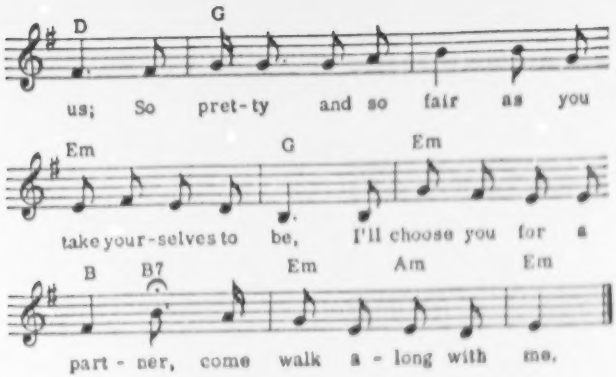
Narrator 7 On both sides volunteers flocked to the colors; in 1861 many songs were composed in their honor. The Song of the Mississippi Volunteers is one of the most stirring. Young girls dance around the marching men and sing the verses; the men answer with the chorus.

Em
O, I would not mar-ry a con-script a-
G
hid-ing in the wood, I'd rath-er mar-ry a
B7
vol-un-teer and do my coun-try good;
Em
Sol-dier boy, O sol-dier boy, a
Am G Em
sol-dier boy for me. If ev-er I get
B B7 Em Am Em
mar-ried, a sol-dier's wife I'll be.
CHORUS
Bm Em
We go walk-ing on the green grass,
Am D7 G
thus, thus, thus: Come all ye fair and
Am6
pret-ty maids, and walk a-long with

THE

MISSISSIPPI VOLUNTEERS

source:

Arthur Palmer Hudson, Songs of Mississippi



I would not marry a conscript a-hiding in the wood
I'd rather marry a volunteer and do my country good;
Soldier boy, O soldier boy, a soldier boy for me,
If ever I get married, a soldier's wife I'll be.

Chorus
We go walking on the green grass, thus, thus, thus,
Come all ye pretty fair maids, and walk along with us
So pretty and so fair as you take yourselves to be,
I'll choose you for a partner, come walk along with me

I would not marry a lawyer, who's pleading at the bar,
I'd rather marry a soldier boy who wears a Southern
Soldier boy, etc. (followed by Chorus) star,

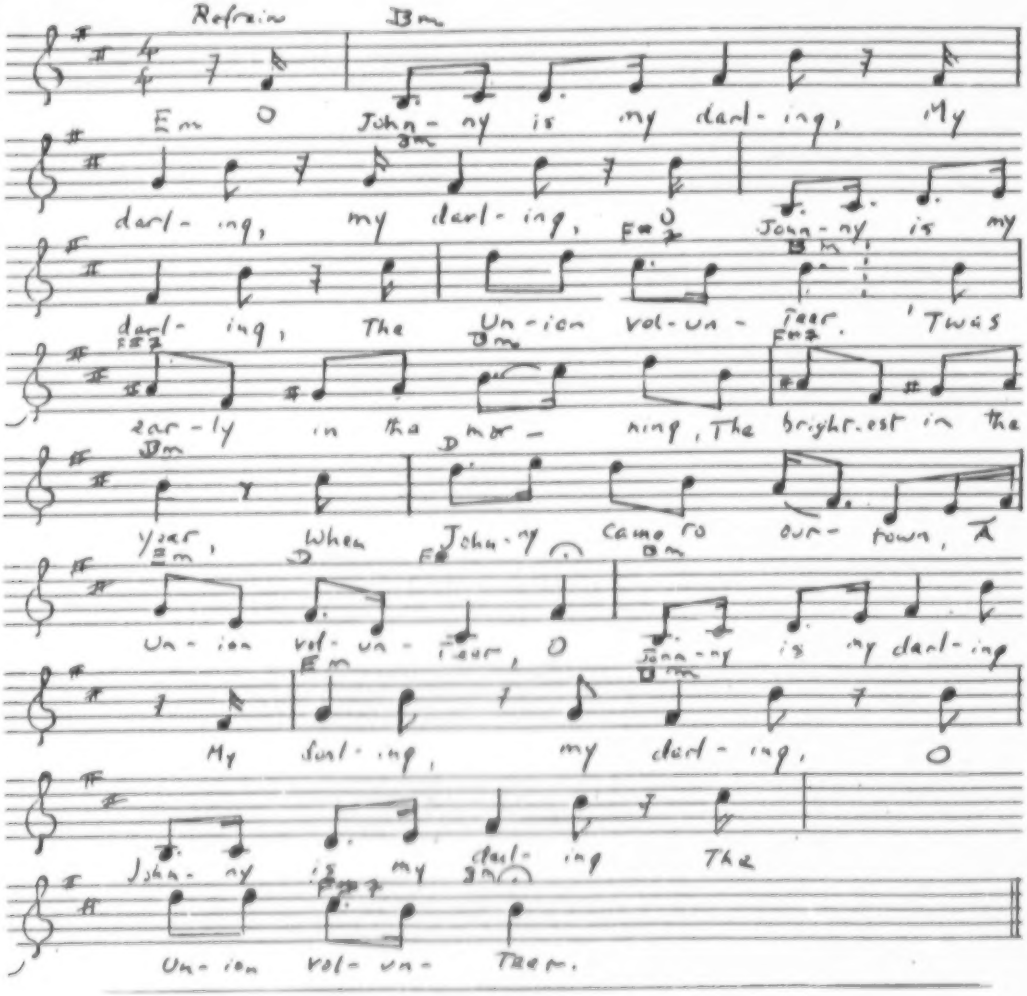
I would not marry a doctor who tries to heal the sick,
I'd rather marry a soldier boy who marches double
Soldier boy, etc., and Chorus quick,

I would not be a lady that Southrons call a belle,
I'd rather be a soldier boy and hear the Yankees yell
Soldier boy, etc., followed by Chorus

I would not be a farmer who's toiling in the sun,
I'd rather be a soldier boy and see the Yankees run,
Soldier boy, etc., followed by Chorus

I would not be a miller who grinds the people's grain
I'd rather be a soldier boy who walks through wind and
Soldier boy, etc., followed by Chorus. rain,

JOHNNY IS MY DARLING

Narrator 8 In the North they sang 'Johnny is my Darling,' set to the tune of a well-loved 18th century Scottish song called 'Charlie is my Darling.'

Refrain
Em
Bm
Em
Johnny is my darling, My darling, my darling, Em
Johnny is my darling, The Union volunteer. 'Twas early in the morning, The brightest in the year, When Johnny came to our town, A Union volunteer, O Johnny is my darling My darling, my darling, O Johnny is my darling The Union volunteer.

source: Beadle's Dime Song Book, No. 12.

Chorus
O Johnny is my darling,
My darling, my darling,
Johnny is my darling,
The Union volunteer.

'Twas early in the morning,
The brightest in the year,
When Johnny came to our town,
A Union volunteer.

Chorus

As he came marching up the street,
The bands played loud and clear,
And everyone came out to greet
A Union volunteer.

Chorus

With proudly waving starry flags,
And hearsts that knew no fear,
He came to fight for freemen's rights,
A Union volunteer.

Chorus

Narrator 9 The Civil War began in a light-hearted mood. Northerners thought that it would be a picnic: one quick summer campaign to teach the enemy a lesson, then back to the home fires before winter set in.

Narrator 10 This rosy dream was shattered at the battle of Manassas, or first Bull Run, in July 1861, when the war began in earnest. Northern forces under General Irvin McDowell moved into Virginia. Congressmen and their wives armed with luncheon baskets went from Washington with the troops to witness the first Northern victory. General Beauregard had different ideas. This first test of strength saw the Union troops running back to Washington as fast as their legs could carry them. The rebels underscored the Yankees' humiliation with a mocking song.

SOUTHERN DOODLE (tune: Yankee Doodle)

Yankee Doodle had a mind
To whip the Southern traitors
Just because they did not choose to live
On codfish and potatoes.
Yankee Doodle fa so la,
Yankee Doodle dandy,
And so to keep his courage up
He took a sip of brandy.

Yankee Doodle drew his sword
And practised all his passes;
Come boys, we'll take another drink
When we get to Manassas.
Yankee Doodle fa so la,
Yankee Doodle dandy,
Never got to Manassas Plain,
And never drank his brandy.

Yankee Doodle soon found out
That Bull Run was no trifle,
For if the North knew how to steal
The South knew how to rifle.
Yankee Doodle, fa so la, etc.,
'Tis very clear I think too much
Of that infernal brandy.'

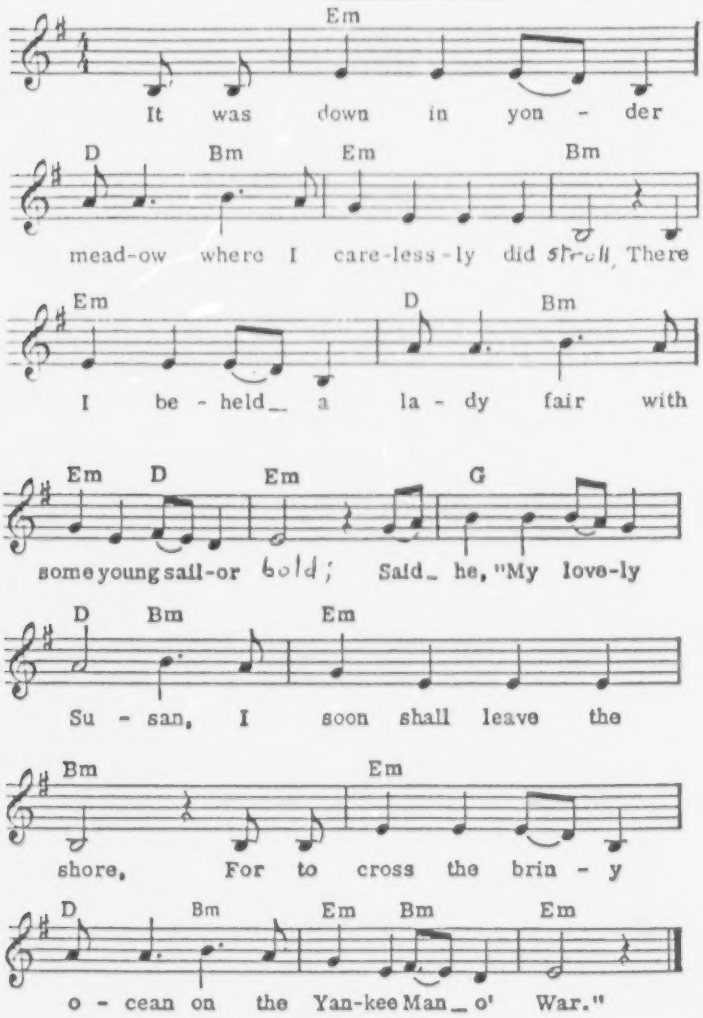
Yankee Doodle wheeled about
And scampered off at full run,
And such a race was never seen
As that he made at Bull Run;
Yankee Doodle, fa so la, etc.,
'I haven't time to stop just now,
To take a drink of brandy.'

Yankee Doodle, all for shame,
You're always intermeddling,
Leave guns at home, they're dangerous things,
You'd better stick to peddling.
Yankee Doodle, fa so la, etc.,
When you get to Bully Run
You'll throw away your brandy.

82

source: Frank Moore, Ballads of the South.

Narrator 10 When the war began the federal government threw a naval blockade around the Southern coasts. The purpose was to throttle the South's overseas trade, especially the export of cotton to England, in return for which the South was able to purchase ammunition, arms and ships. Thus Northern sailors kissed their girls goodbye and headed off to sea.

THE YANKEE MAN OF WAR

Em
It was down in yon - der
D Bm Em Bm
mead-ow where I care-less-ly did stroll There
Em D Bm
I be - held a la - dy fair with
Em D Em G
some young sail-or bold; Said he, "My love-ly
D Bm Em
Su - san, I soon shall leave the
Bm Em
shore, For to cross the brin - y
D Bm Em Bm Em
o - cean on the Yan-kee Man o' War."

It was down in yonder mádow, where I carelessly did stroll,
There I beheld a lady fâir with some young sailor bold;
Said he "My lovely Susan, I soon shall leave the shore
For to cross the briny ocean on the Yankee Man of War."

Young Susan she fell weeping, "Young sailor," she did say,
"How can you be so venturesome and throw yourself away;
For by the time I'm twenty-one I shall receive my store,
So Willie, do not venture on the Yankee Man of War."

"O Susan, lovely Susan, the truth to you I'll tell,
The South she has insulted us, the North she knows it well;
I may be crowned with laurels just like some jolly tar,
And I'll face the forts of the rebels on the Yankee Man of War."

"How can you be so venturesom to face the Southern foe?
When they are far in battle, love, they never take a man;
And from some bloody weapon you might receive a scar,
So Willie, do not venture on the Yankee Man of War."

"O Susan, lovely Susan, the time will quickly pass;
Let's go down to the ferry house and take a parting glass:
My shipmates they are waiting to row me from the shore,
And it's for America's glory on the Yankee Man of War."

The sailor took his handkerchief and tore it into two,
Saying, "Susan you may keep one half, the other I'll keep for you.
When bullets may surround me and the rebel cannon roar,
I'll fight for lovely Susan on the Yankee Man of War."

A few more words together and she let go his hand;
The jolly crew surrounded him and rowed him from the land;
The sailor waved his handkerchief when far away from shore,
And Susan blessed her sailor love on the Yankee Man of War.

(source: Lyrics: H.M. Belden ed., Ballads and Songs Collected by the Missouri Folk-Lore Society.)

Narrator 11 The South could and did harass Northern commerce with her raiders and privateers, but she was powerless to break the blockade. As the war went on Southerners tightened their belts, wove their own clothes and went without. They sang a song about it called THE HOMESPUN DRESS, to the tune of the Bonny Blue Flag.

O yes I am a Southern girl,
And glory in the name,
I boast of it with greater pride
Than glittering wealth and fame.
I envy not the Northern girl
Her robes of beauty rare,
Though diamonds deck her snowy neck
And pearls bestud her hair.

Chorus Hurrah, hurrah, for the sunny South I say,
Three cheers for the homespun dress
That Southern ladies wear.

Now Northern goods are out of date
And since old Abe's blockade,
We Southern girls can be content
With goods that Southrons made.
We send our sweethearts to the war,
But girls, never you mind,
Your soldier love will not forget
The girl he left behind.

Chorus

The Southern land's a glorious land,
And has a glorious cause,
Three cheers, three cheers for Southern rights,
And for the Southern boys.
We scorn to wear a bit of silk,
A bit of Northern lace,
But make our homespun dresses up,
And wear them with a grace.

Chorus (source: Hudson, Folksongs of Mississippi)

Narrator 12 On the western front in the spring of 1862, Generals Ulysses Grant and George Thomas moved southward through Kentucky. Their advance put the Confederacy in deep trouble.

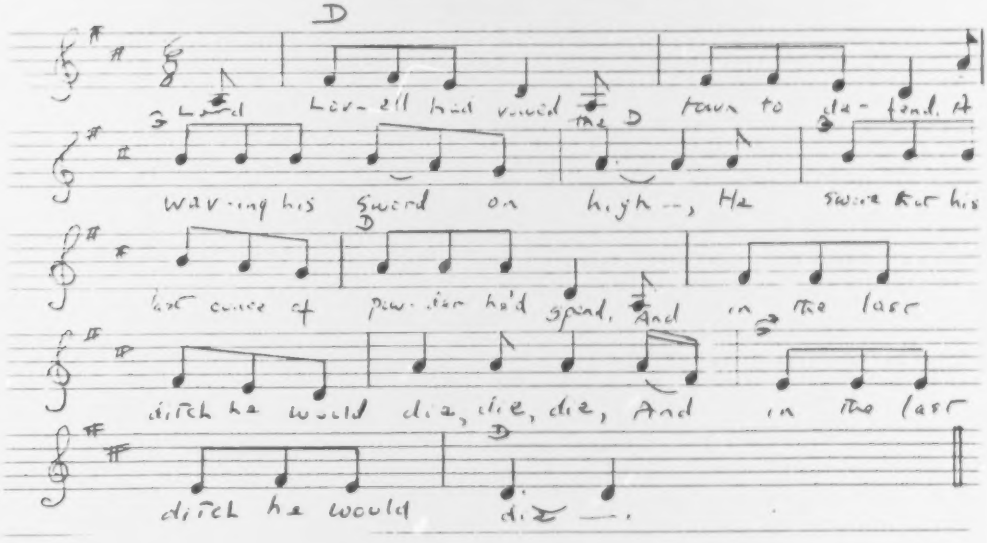
Narrator 13 General Albert S. Johnston counterattacked in April and hurled his army against Grant's when the Union troops were in camp near the Tennessee River, at Shiloh. 25,000 American soldiers were killed or maimed in

this single battle in a single day of war. But Ulysses Grant refused to panic. He held his ground, and drove the enemy away. In the evening a downpour of rain fell upon the living and the dead.

Narrator 14 When Abraham Lincoln was given the news of Shiloh he was living in his own numb agony of grief. A cold rain had fallen while Willie Lincoln was riding his pony; the child became sick and died. In the White House Lincoln gazed long upon the face of his son. "It is hard, hard, hard," he said, "to have him die."

Narrator 15 One week after Shiloh, Union forces seized New Orleans, gateway to the Mississippi and the South's largest port. Ironclads under the command of Commodores David Farragut and David Porter sailed up the river under the mouths of the Confederate guns, landed marines and occupied the city. A ballad mocking the panic-stricken retreat of General Mansfield Lovell and his militia soon became popular with Union soldiers and sailors.

LOVELL AT NEW ORLEANS


D
Lov-ell had vowed
town to de-fend. As
wav-ing his sword on high --, He swore that his
last ounce of pow-der he'd spend. And in the last
ditch he would die, die, die, And in the last
ditch he would die —.

Lord Lovell had vowed the town to defend,
A-waving his sword on high,
He swore that his last ounce of powder he'd spend,
And in the last ditch he would die, die, die,
And in the last ditch he would die.

Sir Farragut came with a mighty fleet,
With a mighty fleet came he,
And Lord Lovell instanter began to retreat,
Before the first boat he could see, see, see,
Before the first boat he could see.

O, a wonder it was to see them run,
A wonderful thing to see,
And the Yankees sailed up without shooting a gun,
And captured their great city, city,
And captured their great city.

Instanter: PDQ Source: Moore, Songs of the Soldiers. Lyric is abridged; melody: traditional.

Narrator 16 In the year that passed after the first battle of Bull Run (July 1861) Union troops on the eastern front in Virginia didn't do so very much. Lincoln replaced McDowell as commander of the Army of the Potomac with George McClellan. McClellan, a young and colorful soldier, was popular with his men, who called him 'Little Mac' or 'the young Napoleon.' Under McClellan's loving care the Army of the Potomac swelled in pride and numbers, and marched up and down in endless parades.

Narrator 17 But all this military fanfare won no battles. One year after the war had begun the North had few victories to brag about. The South remained undefeated: it would take more than a navy, a blockade, and the capture of New Orleans to lick the rebels.

Narrator 18 In the spring of 1862 Lincoln persuaded George McClellan to launch an offensive. In early June, McClellan moved his army by ship down the Virginia coast and landed his troops between the York and James Rivers. Then he advanced westward to attack the Confederate capital. "On to Richmond!" was the battle cry. Jefferson Davis responded by making Robert E. Lee, his most brilliant general, supreme commander of the Confederate forces.

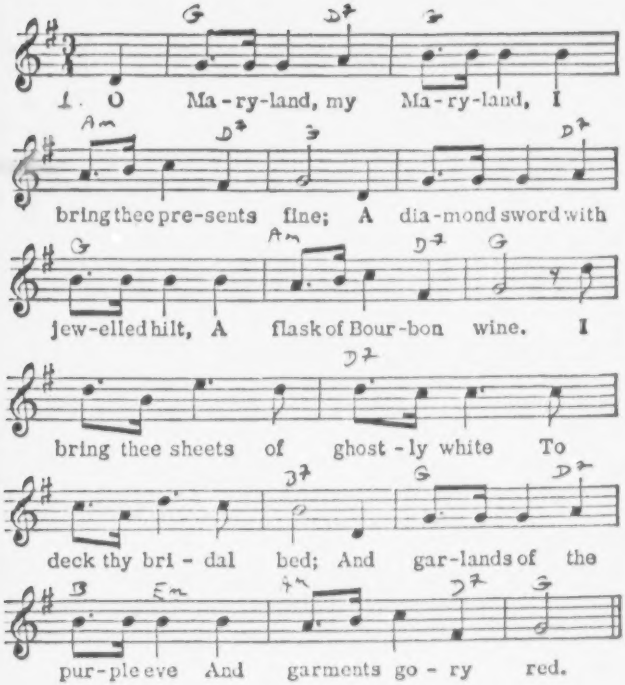
Narrator 19 At the end of June Lee brought McClellan's advance to an abrupt halt in a series of famous engagements known as the Seven Days Fight. Then Lee at once move to the attack. Sweeping northward into Maryland, he placed his army astride the Potomac west of Washington.

Narrator 20 In mid-summer 1862 the world watched and held its breath. A clearcut Southern victory would mean that the British government, which had championed the Southern cause from the start, would recognize the Confederacy as an independent nation. Southern cotton would flow to England to feed British looms; Southern armies would fight with British guns. If Lincoln enforced his blockade against British ships sailing to Southern ports, he would find himself at war with Britain herself.

Narrator 21 General George McClellan rallied the Union forces and met Lee's army at Antietam Creek in Maryland on September 17, 1862. 6,000 American soldiers died there during two days of carnage. 20,000 more were wounded or missing. Lee's casualties were so fearful that he abandoned the battlefield. Long lines limped south taking their maimed and dying with them, leaving bloody tracks in the dust.

Narrator 22 On the twenty-fourth of September 1862, six days after the battle of Antietam, Lincoln issued his first, or preliminary, Emancipation Proclamation. He informed the Confederate government that the slaves would be freed on January 1, 1863, if the Confederacy had not laid down its arms by that time. Antietam Creek was the Civil War's most critical battle. It le d directly to the emancipation of the slaves and the eventual defeat of the South.

Narrator 23 An unknown Northern soldier wrote a song to commemorate Antietam, called 'General Lee's Wooing.' It portrays General Lee as a lover wooing Maryland with the grim gifts of war. Lee himself sings of what he sought to win in this battle, and of the fate, instead, that his soldiers suffered.

GENERAL LEE'S WOOING
see page 23

1. O Ma-ry-land, my Ma-ry-land, I
bring thee pre-sents fine; A dia-mond sword with
jew-elled hilt, A flask of Bour-bon wine. I
bring thee sheets of ghost-ly white To
deck thy bri-dal bed; And gar-lands of the
pur-ple eve And garments go-ry red.

GENERAL LEE'S WOOING

Vocabulary:

yeomanry: farmers
wains: wagons
trysting tree: tree where lovers meet
buttonwoods: synonym for Southern soldiers
furze: gorse, or meadow flower

source: Frank Moore, The Civil War in Song and Story

2

O Maryland, my Maryland,
Sweet land upon the shore,
Bring out thy stalwart yeomanry,
Make clean the threshing floor.
My ready wains lie stretching far
Across the fertile plain,
And I among the reapers stand
To gather in the grain.

3

O Maryland, my Maryland,
O fondly wait to see,
Thy banners flaunting in
the breeze
Beneath the trysting tree.
While all my gallant chivalry,
Proud gentlemen with spurs,
Come tramping, tramping o'er
the hills
And tramping through the
furze.

4

O Maryland, my Maryland,
I feel the leaden rain,
I see the winged messenger
Come hurling to my brain.
I feathered with thy golden
hair,
'This feathered now in vain
I spurn the hand that loosed
the shaft,
And curse then in my pain.

5

O Maryland, my Maryland,
Alas the ruthless day,
That sees my gallant button-
woods
Ride galloping away.
And ruthless for my chivalry
Proud gentlemen with spurs,
Whose bones lie stark upon
hills,
And stark among the furze.

Narrator 24 The Emancipation Proclamation was an historic step. It provided the North with a new war aim: the destruction of slavery. This step converted the Civil War into a struggle of world significance.

Narrator 25 Lincoln sought, through Emancipation, the achievement of an immediate goal that, in his view, was indispensable to a Union victory. Emancipation would win the support of the British working people. The English people,rallying to the cause of human freedom as Lincoln now proclaimed it, would checkmate the British government and put an end to its plans to intervene in the struggle on the Southern side. It was not compassion for the slaves which impelled Lincoln to issue his historical Proclamation. He did it to cope with the harsh realities of war and to ensure the survival of the Union that he had sworn to defend.

Narrator 26 On January 1 1863 in all the vast territory which the Confederacy controlled the slaves were declared free. Black men now sprang to arms. Frederick Douglass, ex-slave and Abolitionist toured Northern cities in the spring of 1863 to recruit free men of color as soldiers for the Union forces. Go, he urged them, to Readville, near Boston, and enlist in the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment (Colored) that is now being organized and trained there.

Frederick Douglass "Men of color, to arms! The chance is now given you to end in a day the bondage of centuries....Remember Nathaniel Turner...remember Shields Green and Copeland who followed noble John Brown, and fell as glorious martyrs for the slave."

Narrator 27 In 1863 African-Americans began to march away to war by the tens of thousands to fight for their freedom and their country. African-Amaerican soldiers recruited fresh volunteers with their marching songs.

THE FIRST OF ARKANSAS (tune: John Brown's Body)

O we're the bully soldiers of the First of Arkansas,
We are fighting for our freedom, we are fighting for the law
We can hit a rebel further than a white man ever saw,
As we go marching on.

Chorus Glory, glory, hallelujah (three times)
As we go marching on.

See there above the center where the flag is waving bright,
We are going out of slavery, we are bound for freedom's light,
We mean to show Jeff Davis how the Africans can fight,
As we go marching on.

Chorus

We have done with hoeing cotton we have done with hoeing corn
We are colored Yankee soldiers now, as sure as you are born;
When the masters hear us yellin' they will think it's Gabriel's horn,
As we go marching on.

Chorus

They said "Now colored brethren, you shall be forever free,
From the First of January, Eighteen Hundred Sixty-Three;"
We heard it in the river going rushing to the sea,
As it went sounding on.

Chorus

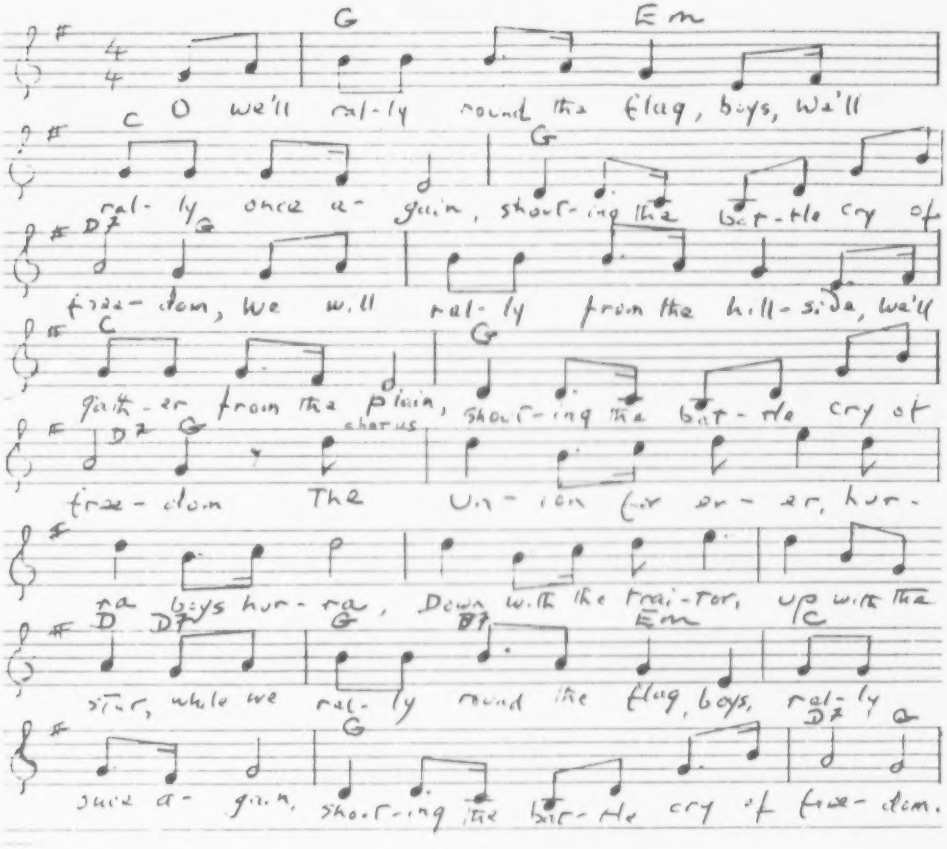
They will have to pay us wages, the wages of their sin,
They will have to bow their foreheads to their colored kith and kin,
They will have to give us houseroom or the roof will tumble in,
As we go marching on.

Chorus

Then fall in, colored brethren, you'd better do it soon,
Don't you hear the drum a-beatin' the Yankee Doodle tune?
We are with you now this morning, we'll be far away at noon,
As we go marching on.

Chorus [source: Frank Moore, Songs of the Soldiers.]

Narrator 28 June 1863. Once more General Lee and his armies raced north, up the Shenandoah Valley, past Washington D.C., and into Pennsylvania. Once more there was a horrible collision, this time at Gettysburg. Soldiers on both sides sang the same stirring song, "The Battle Cry of Freedom." (See page 26)

THE BATTLE CRY OF FREEDOM

O we'll rally round the flag, boys, We'll
rally once again, shouting the battle cry of
freedom, We will rally from the hillside, We'll
gather from the plain, shouting the battle cry of
freedom The Union forever, hurra, hurra,
boys hurra, Down with the traitor, up with the
star, while we rally round the flag, boys, rally
once again, shouting the battle cry of freedom.
chorus

The Blues O we'll rally round the flag, boys,
We'll rally once again,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom,
We will rally from the hillside,
We will gather from the plain,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom.

Chorus The Union forever, hurra boys hurra,
Down with the traitor, up with the star,
While we rally round the flag, boys,
Rally once again,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom.

THE BATTLE CRY OF FREEDOM

27

The Grays We are marching to the field, boys,
We're going to the fight,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom,
And we bear the heavenly cross,
For our cause is in the right,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom.

Chorus Our rights forever, hurra boys hurra,
Down with the tyrants, raise the
Southern star,
And we'll rally round the flag boys,
Rally once again,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom.

The Blues So we're springing to the call
From the east and from the west,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom,
And we'll hurl the rebel crew
From the land we love the best,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom.

Chorus: The Blues

The Grays We'll fight them to the last boys,
If we fall in the strife,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom,
Our comrades, noble boys,
Will avenge us life for life,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom.

Chorus: The Grays

Narrator 29 Spring, 1864. Now, finally, it was the North's turn to attack and to move south. Ulysses Grant, Lincoln's new commander-in-chief, launched a massive offensive against the Virginia line. At the same time General Sherman, far in Lee's rear, drove along the railroad line from Chatanooga to Savannah, and then turned north. Lee was taken in a vise between the two federal armies.

Narrator 30 In the savage Wilderness Campaign in Virginia Grant's men were thrown back time and again with huge losses. But still the blueclad soldiers came on. There was, it seemed, no end to the Northerners seeking graves in Southern soil.

Narrator 31 The end came on Sunday April 9, 1865, when Lee laid down his arms at Appomatox. The war was over. It marked the beginning of a long struggle for the defeat of racism in America that is not over yet.

Narrator 32 Less than one week after Lee's surrender at Appomatox, an assassin's bullet struck Abraham Lincoln at Ford's Theater in Washington. In a few hours the president was dead. John Hay, his secretary, gazed on the president's face. Over those care-lined features had come, he said, "a look of unspeakable peace."

BIBLIOGRAPHY/DISCOGRAPHY

James M. McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom: the Civil War Era (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988) is an excellent reference for battles (Antietam) or campaigns (the Wilderness). Songs of the Civil War, compiled and edited by Irwin Silber, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960) is the standard song collection. Lois Hill ed., Poems and Songs of the Civil War (New York: Fairfax Press, 1990), reproduces many additional songs but no music. It is distributed by Outlet Book Co., 235 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y., 10016. John Anthony Scott, The Ballad of America (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1983), has a chapter on the Civil War and reproduces sixteen songs with lyrics and music. The bibliography provides information concerning basic sources for further research and the discography lists classic 33 rpm records which are not yet available on cassette or CD. James M. McPherson, Marching Toward Freedom: Blacks in the Civil War 1861-1865 (New York: Facts on File, 1991) tells the story of African-American soldiers.

When General Lee swept northward into Maryland in 1862 he was aiming at a victory that would bring about the overthrow of the Union. Lee's defeat at Antietam turned the situation upside down. Lincoln emancipated the slaves. Six months later, on July 18, 1863, African-American soldiers stormed Fort Wagner on Morris Island in Charleston harbor. The attack failed and hundreds of men gave their lives in the attempt. Fort Wagner showed that in courage and dedication to the Union black soldiers were equal to whites. July 18 blazed the way for tens of thousands of African-Americans to enter the army. As historian Benjamin Quarles has written: "Wagner was a turning point in the war. The valor of the 600 enlisted men of the Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts Infantry opened the floodgates for the fresh army of more than 180,000 Negro soldiers who would infuse new spirit into a war-weary North." (The Negro in the Civil War, p. 21).

This historic train of events -- Antietam, Emancipation, Fort Wagner and the appearance of a decisive African-American presence in the war -- illuminates the full meaning of "General Lee's Wooing;" one of the Civil War's most profound and splendid songs.

Old Abe Lincoln Came Out of the Wilderness was a Republican Party campaign song in the 1860 election.

The Dissolution Wagon was a Ssouthern version of a popular song of the period, "Wait for the Wagon". The cheerful tune is Irish traditional.

The Northern Bonny Blue Flag is a Northern version of "The Bonny Blue Flag," a popular Southern song. The fine melody is also Irish traditional.

The Mississippi Volunteers has been widely found in the South. The melody remains a children's favorite.

Johnny Is My Darling has a lyric taken with minor changes from "Charlie Is My Darling," composed in honor of Charles Stuart, leader of the Scottish Rebellion (1715) against England. The rousing melody is Scots traditional.

Southern Doodle. Making fun of the enemy was a strategy used by both sides; here the Yankees gave as good as they got. See "Lovell at New Orleans" below.

The Yankee Man of War was inspired by "The Lowlands of Holland," a woman's lament for her lover lost at sea, and composed in Scotland in the early 18th century. The melody is one of the loveliest in our heritage.

The Homespun Dress sounds the same theme as "Young Ladies in Town," a song of the American Revolution urging women to spin and weave their own clothes. (see III #1)

General Lee's Wooing: for comment, see p. 29.

Lovell at New Orleans combines a mocking lyric with a well-loved melody from an old English ballad, "Lord Lovell" (Child Ballad #75).

The Battle Cry of Freedom was written by George F. Root in 1862 as a Northern war song which Southern soldiers were soon singing with different lyrics. The song ranks among the greatest that the Civil War produced.

The First of Arkansas was written by Capt. Lindley Miller and soldiers of the First Arkansas Regiment (Colored).

The Irish Immigration script was preceded by a one-page script summary, which was written by the students themselves in order to introduce their listeners to the narrative performance which they were about to witness. In our Civil War script, it will be noted, this script summary is conspicuous by its absence. We provided it in XII #2 only as an example of what we are now talking about. The summary is a maximum of a single page.

After your students are familiar with the script, ask each of them to write a script summary. Explain what you mean by this: a summary which unfolds concisely and systematically the essence of the story. If you have already used the Irish script, remind the students of the summary by reading it aloud.

The summaries may be written in class, but it is better that they be assigned as homework. To do a good summary the students will have to consult the script. Students should also be encouraged to consult each other as they prepare their summaries. We believe that real learning involves a dialogue with other people: anthropologists call this 'cultural diffusion.' But each student should write a separate summary. Apart from this there is only one rule: the summaries must not be more than a page in length.

The purpose of this exercise is twofold: to give students practice in concise and accurate expression of the essence of a situation; and to enable the teacher to establish exactly what the students learned from the script and what they missed. A whole hour may then be devoted to a report on the summaries and a discussion of them.

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